

Introduction to Prejudice Issues

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Introduction

This tiny booklet is NOT easy reading. (Tiny - it started as 5 pages.)

Many of these issues will open up feelings of shame or guilt. This makes it very challenging for us to directly face these issues.

The dominant groups in our society benefit greatly and do not want to lose these unfair benefits. As a result, these issues are not widely discussed. Most people actively avoid facing these issues. This leaves most minority groups significantly disadvantaged.

Until we act decisively on these issues, many minority groups will continue to be significantly disadvantaged.

It feels like many chapters relating to rather separate issues, so that on first glance it does not appear to relate to a single topic. With careful listening to the world around, between reading chapters, these articles can eventually be seen as all relating towards the benefits of working optimistically together based on the facts and not on prejudices. Such is the complexity of human life.

This Introduction starts with Disability, perhaps physical or perhaps in terms of mental health. Mental health issues commonly are the result of childhood or later abuse. As a child or young person, they were unable to protect themselves from abuse by other people. We should not further victimise them, for their childhood vulnerability.

The issues related to prejudice apply in similar ways to racial abuse, class prejudice and all of the other prejudices.

TL; DR Too Long; Didn't Read

This booklet is best treated as a background resource. It is NOT suggested to try to read this booklet in one go. If a topic in the real world suddenly becomes of interest, then look up that topic in the Table of Contents, or using the search function to find that word in the whole booklet. Just read the topics that you can see as important for you.

The acceptance of someone different to me, be it age, sex, class, gender, culture, disability etc, remains scary and difficult for many people (fear).

If we are not careful, we may place this person as OTHER. That follows on to making it easy for us to treat that person unfairly and prejudicially, as we refuse to be aware of any pain that we cause to them.

Due to the emotional barriers that get in the way of us learning and applying these concepts and issues, many of the examples have been taken from USA. **USA is far enough away, that we don't take many of the challenges quite as challenging to our Ego.**

But for us to apply this knowledge, we must move up to the position where we can face issues of prejudice as they are in NZ. I am not meaning these examples as criticism of people in the USA – us NZers are just as “bad” at many times. When we have the emotional strength, then let's face our own problems head-on and then make the necessary positive changes in our NZ society to give everyone equity of opportunity.

Abundant life for all

Since 1981, the International Year of the Disabled Person, there has been a growing awareness of the need to make society more accessible for everyone. Most people with disabilities are now living and participating in local communities. In 2001, the New Zealand Disability Strategy was produced. It outlines what a truly inclusive society may look like. In 2008 New Zealand ratified the United Nations Convention on the Rights of People with Disabilities. These documents are important in defining current thinking about disability:

Disability is the process which happens when one group of people create barriers by designing a world only for their way of living, taking no account of the impairments other people have. Our society is built in a way that assumes that we can all move quickly from one side of the road to the other; that we can all see signs, read directions, hear announcements, reach buttons, have the strength to open heavy doors and have stable moods and perceptions.

Vision

New Zealand is a non-disabling society – a place where disabled people have an **equal opportunity to achieve their goals and aspirations**, and all of New Zealand works together to make this happen.

- New Zealand Disability Strategy 2016

<https://www.odt.govt.nz/nz-disability-strategy/about-the-strategy/new-zealand-disability-strategy-2016-2026/read-the-new-disability-strategy/>

Mahatma Gandhi who said “A nation’s greatness is measured by how it treats its most disadvantaged or marginalised members.”

This booklet contains a few example of allyship issues, taken from different areas of disability. Although each article is not aimed at the wider disability topic, it can be seen that all of these issues, perhaps with a little modification, apply in some way to almost all disability situations.

It may take a significant amount of knowledge and thought, to move these types of concepts between different disability areas. Being human, we usually need to have several examples of moving concepts between disability areas, before we can confidently and proficiently do it ourselves. This is why this booklet includes quite a few examples, to illustrate how to apply learning about one disability, into other disability areas.

These issues face all of us in our everyday lives. What matters is how we behave naturally and instinctually, not what we say about what we would do.

This is NOT a book-reading topic, though that is a good place to start.

To improve our everyday instinctive behaviours, we need to advance from reading books, to actively learning in the wider world around us. We need to move outside of our comfort zone social groups, to moving in social circles unfamiliar to ourselves. We need to be willing to make mistakes, learn from them and to make amends as we go.

This is self-managed experiential and affective learning.

(The aim of this booklet is to encourage readers to start this journey into cultural inclusion and care.)

The places where we can learn the most, are among people more marginalised than ourself. Probably we have better access to physical resources, so be contributing. This is altruism and creating value by teamwork and sharing.

Don't jump in at the deepest end, be conscious of your own limitations and choose challenges that you can safely learn from.

As well as book reading, there are many videos which cover these issues more viscerally than black and white text. These videos are valuable stepping stones between book learning and real world active learning. We are learning the most when we are listening and working to understand.

Our cultural learning is what we gain, so value it, through embarrassment, guilt, pain and euphoria. Value seeing other people's gains and successes.

1 Corinthians 13 1

Love is patient, love is kind. It does not envy, it does not boast, it is not proud. It is not rude, it is not self-seeking, it is not easily angered, it keeps no record of wrongs. Love does not delight in evil but rejoices with the truth.

It will be noticed that almost all of the human relationships involve stresses acting in both directions. These stresses are challenging and when extreme, may result in violence of behaviour, words or even physically dangerous violence. This is why oppression needs to be seen as a circular set of relationships, if we want to be informed and able to make constructive changes in our society.

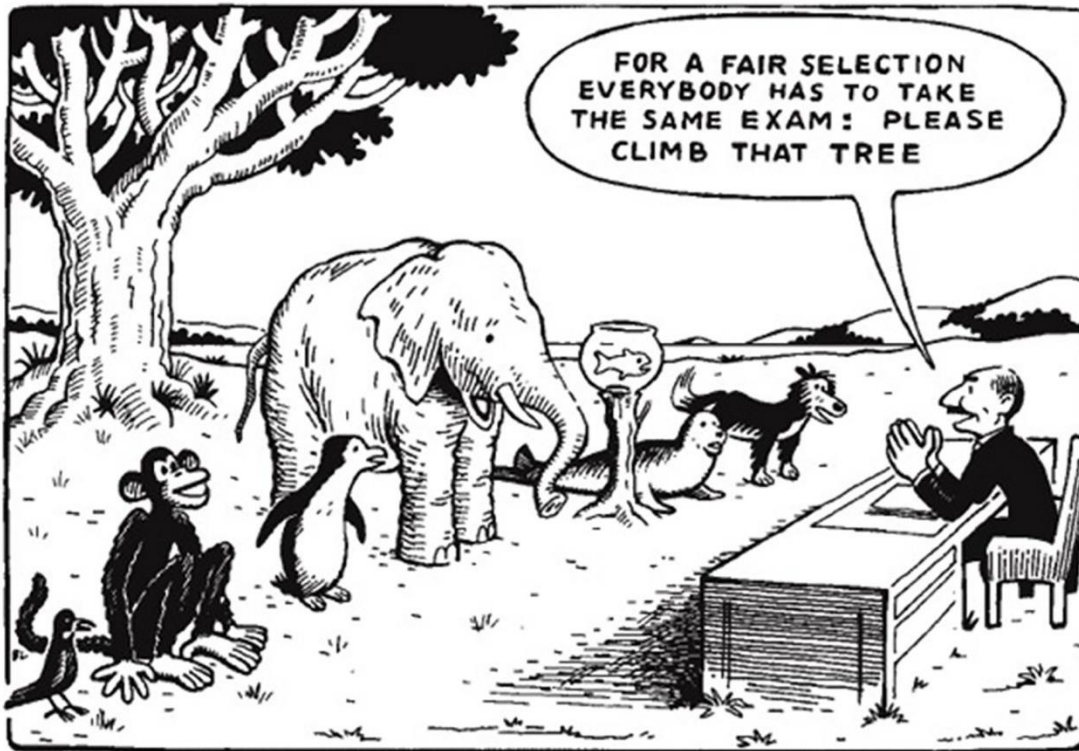
The two ways that all pressures react, applies across all relationships. For this reason, dynamics that apply to one type of oppression, occur in somewhat similar ways in most other types of oppression. This booklet gives several examples where articles about one type of oppression, make sense when a few words are changed and then applies quite well for a completely different type of oppression. This point is important, when you understand one type of oppression, you are more than half way towards understanding most other types of oppressions. Certainly power dynamics may be mild, or may be extreme. This makes huge differences in the way that oppressions play out in the wider world.

Can you walk an hour in that person's shoes? Or a day, or a month?



Social understanding is an old topic, but still poorly understood..... Let us work together on it?

Thanks to the authors of the articles included into this booklet.



Paula Tesoriero: said

On creating a level playing field one of the biggest challenges ... "is actually knowing how uneven the field is to begin with and how big the bumps are along the way" ...

..." a solution that we need to look at is ensuring that data can be desegregated by gender and by disability" ...

Extract from: Far From the Tree by Andrew Soloman

... "There is something ironic in prejudice against the disabled and their families, because their plight might befall anybody. Straight men are unlikely to wake up gay one morning, and white children don't become black; but any of us could be disabled in an instant" ... "Worldwide, some 550 million people are disabled. The disability-rights scholar Tobin Siebers has written, "The cycle of life runs in actuality from disability to temporary ability back to disability, and that only if you are among the most fortunate." ...

... "The able-bodied can be generous narcissists: they eagerly bestow what they feel good about giving without considering how it will be received. Conversely, the social model of disability demands that society modify the way business is done to empower people with disabilities, and we make such adjustments only when lawmakers accept that life can be painful for those who live at the margins. Patronizing gestures can be justly scorned, but increased empathy is often a precondition of political acceptance and an engine of reform. Many disabled people say that the social disapprobation they experience is much more burdensome than the disability from which they suffer, maintaining simultaneously that they suffer only because society treats them badly, and that they have unique experiences that set them apart from the world—that they are eminently special and in no way different" ...



WARNING WARNING WARNING: The graphic above does communicate the issues about impacts of disability. But, does it also unwittingly also show racial prejudice, that many of the poorest people in our community are people of colour??????

Or... I don't want equality or equity that makes me part of a society built on the abuse & violence that reinforces systemic discrimination. (fence is removed but it is men only, always some marginalised groups struggling for respect, inclusion & resources. Tokenism is part of tactics that control us and turn us against each other). I could turn my back on that kind of society and its tokenism and create a new society, one founded on co-operation, peace, balance & love.

Disability-based discrimination plus gender-based discrimination double the difficulties and stress faced by disabled women. 24% of New Zealanders are disabled, 89% of these are adults; 50% of the adult disability population are women; Maori women experience higher rates of disability than non-Maori. Disabled women, regardless of ethnicity and age encounter discrimination, marginalisation and exclusion in all areas of their lives - this is more severe for Maori than non-Maori. Addressing and redressing all these issues is urgent.

Ref: <http://www.un.org/disabilities/default.asp?id=150>

Until the last decade, representation of many of the marginalized women's groups, including disabled women, was missing from most of the women's NGOs in Aotearoa. In 2021, despite 24% of the population identifying as disabled in the last census, there is 0% (zero) visible disabled women/people in Parliament and 0% politicians who identify as disabled. There is no Ministry of Disabled People as there are for other marginalised populations, e.g., Maori, Pasifika and Women (*Update: October 2021 new Ministry of & by Disabled people announced*)

Government meetings organized to hear the voice of disabled people have larger numbers of non-disabled service providers and family members, who dominate discussions on what disabled people need and want. The Medical (discriminatory) Model of Disability prevails in NZ. Their priority is funding. Disabled women/people priorities are respect, dignity, safety, accessibility and inclusion.

A survey DWF did amongst disabled women some years ago said the number one social issue for disabled women, by far, was the violence and abuse targeted against us. This has not changed. The abuse and violence and the lack of access to services!

Despite Aotearoa NZ signing and ratifying the CRPD (Convention for the Rights of Persons with Disabilities) in 2008, the Medical Model of Disability, not the Social/Human Rights Model, still dominates legislation, policy and planning, e.g., the Health & Disability Act. Despite the combined voices of disabled women/people saying disability is not part of health, disability continues to be perceived as a health issue in Aotearoa. Instead of yet another physical difference the cycle of systemic discrimination uses to raise us to fear difference/each other.

In 2018, the government updated the Domestic Violence Act. The new Family Violence Act continues to exclude us, the change of name alone (removing domestic violence) excludes the variety of domestic households many of us live in, however it does now acknowledge that support staff can be intimate members of our domestic households.

It would be even better if government stopped using inappropriate, disempowering language such as "carers" and "vulnerable" etc. Language is not only powerful it is power and is used to disempower and marginalise communities of people to promote the power, control and economies of other groups of people. Our societies have created multi-billion-dollar industries globally on the backs of disabled people since the advent of industrialization.

The language of abuse/violence, including institutionalization, systemic discrimination and the social hierarchies of capitalism, marginalise and exclude disabled people from social access and participation. This continues on a daily basis for disabled women.

zzzz Patterson-Lima, a non-disabled woman on the ZZZZ committee, could hear and understand, so approached three of the women on the committee who are DWF representatives or members. She asked if she could champion a conference for disabled women.

"Recognizing that disability is an evolving concept and that disability results from the interaction between persons with impairments and attitudinal barriers that hinders their full and effective participation in society on an equal basis with others."

Source: United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons With Disabilities 2006

Disability is not something individuals have. IT IS SOMETHING DONE TO THEM, BY OTHERS, ON A DAILY BASIS.

It is discrimination.

There are many different disability service providers within NZ. They operate from the outdated Medical Model of Disability that preceded the Social/Human Rights Model that the United Nations legislated in 2006 and Aotearoa NZ signed and agreed to implement in 2008. Nineteen years later we are still waiting for the Social/Human Rights Model of disability to be implemented in Aotearoa NZ.

Disabled women feel less than optimally supported by these organizations. Many of the organizations have existed for over 50 years, predating the Social/Human Rights Model of Disability. The organizations have been slow to incorporate the Social Model of Disability into their culture and methods of operation. We suspect most service providers have never read or understood the international laws NZ is signatory to, including the CRPD (Convention for the Rights of Persons with Disabilities).

Relevant to disabled women is CEDAW, 1979 (Convention for the Elimination of Discrimination Against Women), CERD (Convention for the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination) 1966, ICESCR 1966 (International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights, ICCPR (International Covenant for Civil and Political Rights 1966, CAT (Convention Against Torture and Other Cruel, Inhumane or Degrading Treatment or Punishment) 1984, CRC (Convention for the Rights of Children) the 1995, CPRMWF, (Convention for the Protection of Migrant Workers and their Families) 1990. All international legal agreements covered in the above conventions and covenants are important human rights agreements integral to the intersectionality of some of the disabled women of Aotearoa.

The question remains, why are governments globally invested financially in United Nations agreements that protect business and trade, finances, economies and especially the global industrial military complex and not in the human rights of the peoples who make up their populations. Disabled women have been devalued from the moment the Industrialization began. Institutions and our modern-day Capitalist/Colonialism form of systemic discrimination evolved when this era of Patriarchal history unfolded. This was the birth of Ablism, when physical difference was divided into self-named able-bodied people (Ables) and other named disabled people. In reality, a disabled woman is a woman who is dis-abled by other women/people, whose beliefs, attitudes and action create the environmental barriers that result in social exclusion.

Today, 2021, it continues as the NZ Government funding processes continue to emphasise the Medical Model of Disability. In this respect, NZ lags by 2 or 3 decades behind many other major western democracies. The Social Model of Disability

supports individual and collective human rights, the Medical Model does not. The Social Model understands systemic discrimination is the problem and outlines how to stop the discrimination and uphold human rights. The Medical Model reinforces and continues the discrimination, ignoring human rights as it chooses.

The Social Model understands that disability and health are two separate things, in the same way Women and health, Maori and health etc are separate. All women, disabled, or non-disabled can have health issues, or not. Despite the CRPD stating governments will provide funding to educated disabled people on both the CRPD and their human rights, most know nothing, or very little about either.

When you do not know your rights, under a Medical Model of Disability, you lose your voice, frightened a complaint will result in any support you are receiving being taken away from you. The support staff you hire from service provision agencies, specialist recruitment and training agencies are called in legislation "carers" within the medical model and both agency and staff placed in a position of power over disabled people who are perceived as the patient within a health system.

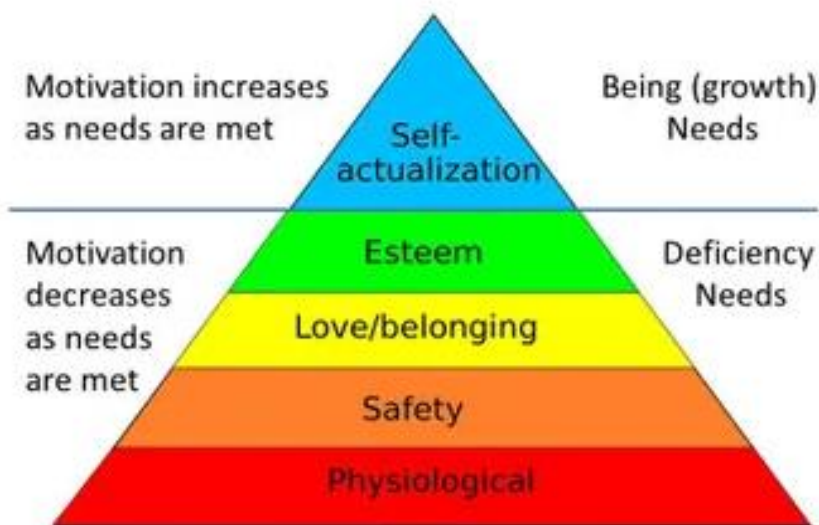
The lack of information, knowledge and advocacy for and by disabled clients within the medical model separates and isolates us from each other and others in a social system that excludes us in many ways, including environmental barriers that make simple daily activities inaccessible.

Understanding of the issues, implications and consequences of the Social Model of Disability is not as simple as first meets the eye. Although the Social Model of Disability is described in the CRPD, to have a reasonable understanding of issues of implementation into the lives of disabled people, is a broad and intricate area, due to the diversity of individual circumstances and relevant policies that impact. It isn't rocket science but it involves the complexities of human lives.

"Too often, our solutions have assumed a universal experience of violence and denied disabled people opportunities to report and appropriate services to keep them safe if they do," Logie says. "We have to design policies, processes and safety plans that work for all people impacted by family violence."

Fragility is when privileged people refuse to acknowledge the unfair advantages that they have enjoyed and refuse to acknowledge the unfair impacts onto more marginalised people or to make any amends.

When evaluating quality of life, or well-being, it is important to keep an eye on all of the layers in Maslow's Hierarchy of needs. Being fully self-actualised is of little value if you are starving, or scared for your physical safety, or scared about the fragility of your personal relationships, or the cost of transport means that social participation would be at the cost of being able to eat satisfactorily..



<https://www.cdc.gov/hrqol/wellbeing.htm>

<https://www.mentalhealth.org.nz/home/our-work/category/42/five-ways-to-wellbeing-at-work-toolkit>

<https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Flourishing>

WHAT IS DISABILITY by Lorri Mackness

" *Recognizing* that disability is an evolving concept and that disability results from the interaction between persons with impairments and attitudinal barriers that hinders their full and effective participation in society on an equal basis with others."

Source: United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons With Disabilities 2006

Disability is not something individuals have. IT IS SOMETHING DONE TO THEM, BY OTHERS, ON A DAILY BASIS.

It is discrimination.

Discrimination is:

- The attitudes and actions that act out oppression
- Where people are treated less favourably and/or differently because they belong to a specific group within society.
- People think others are less worthwhile, able, equal, significant or less entitled to live within our society.

People considered not entitled to be treated with dignity and respect

Models of Disability

Began with the Charity Model.

Then

The Medical Model of disability views disability as a lack in the disabled person, who is contrasted against the 'norm', non-disabled people. This definition is imposed on disabled people by non-disabled professionals and the general public.

Now

The social model of disability, a human rights based model, says disability is ... "the result of disabling social, environmental and attitudinal behaviours"... (Howe, 2000, p.2)

A rights based model changes the needs of disabled people into rights they have and is founded on human rights framework -

Universal Declaration of Human Rights and the Convention for the Rights of Persons with Disabilities

As citizens rather than service users, disabled people have the same rights as everyone else

In NZ, Disability is seen as something the person has that needs to be fixed or changed, something wrong with the person. The medical model still predominates in social conditioning and attitudes.

What individuals have, are ways of being different to the norm. They may be physical, sensory, neurological, psychiatric, intellectual, psychological and other physiological differences. Disability is the process which happens when one group of people create barriers by designing a world only for their way of living, taking no account of other ways of being and doing things.

Definitions:

Disabled women = disabled woman is shorthand for: women who are disabled, by nondisabled women/people's attitudes and actions, that excludes them from full social participation.

Disability= Disability is a marginalisation of one group of people by another group who disrespect, disempower, disable and exclude the marginalised group/person.

The group with the social power to dictate who is included and who is excluded, has the power and control to enable or disabled acceptance and inclusion.

It begins with the socially conditioned attitudes of the person (i.e. systemic discrimination taught thru social institutions ...government...schools...churches...family unit...etc)

Disable = To choose (conscious or unconscious), to exclude a person physically (includes mental and learning...all based on physiology), different to the group of people who determine who is included or excluded; empowered or disempowered, enabled or disabled.

Membership of Disability Community:

Disability Community is all inclusive. All oppressed/discriminated groups oppress/discriminate against their "disabled" members.

What does this mean?

It means all society establish their norms. They decide what is "physiologically normal"...what sex, colour, ethnicity, age, gender, status is of most value to the social structure and rank accordingly.

Disability in our societies appears to be ascribed to physiological differences....when the body does not look or work in ways defined as normal.....if different to the norm, then you are "impaired" in some way

Definition of impairment is: ...the act of spoiling or making it weaker so that it is less effective ... and ... deterioration in the functioning of a body part, organ or system Cambridge Dictionary or

... the state of being diminished, weakened or damaged

or

A decrease in strength or value.... and.... A physical or mental defect at the level of a body system or organ. The official WHO definition is: any loss or abnormality of psychological

Disability Service Provision in NZ

This is a multibillion-dollar industry built on the backs of people viewed as "disabled" and seen thru the lens of the old medical model of "disability"

With the Convention for the Rights of People with Disabilities, that NZ government signed in 2006 and ratified in 2008, came the Social/Human Rights Model of Disability.

Ratification is the government agreeing to take international laws and agreements they sign up to and make sure they are in ALL national laws and agreements so "disabled women/people" have equal participation/equal rights, in our society.

More than a decade after signing the CRPD, the Medical Model of Disability = something wrong with the woman/person that needs to be fixed, is still the predominant perception of disabled women in Aotearoa.

The acceptance of someone different to me, be it age, sex, class, gender, culture, disability etc, remains scary and difficult for most women/people.

CEDAW (26a) and Service Providers:

Adopt a comprehensive and cross-party strategy on combating gender based violence against women in accordance with general recommendation No.35 (2017) on gender-based violence against women, updating general recommendation No.19 and ensure its consistent implementation, including by strictly applying the family and Whanau Violence Legislation Bill and by inter alia, including measures that specifically protect women with disabilities that are confronting abusive care-givers;

Persons with disabilities include those who have long-term physical, mental, intellectual or sensory impairments which in interaction with various barriers may hinder their full and effective participation in society on an equal basis with others.

extracted from: United Nations Convention on Rights of People with Disabilities

<https://www.un.org/disabilities/documents/convention/convoptprot-e.pdf>

Jesus said 'I have come that they may have life and have it abundantly'.

John 10:10

A positive attitude to include all people as equals and so enable their full and equal participation in both sharing in and leading worship is at the heart of the Gospel.'

Being human

.....

Throughout our lives we experience different levels of dependency. When we are born we are totally dependent on others for all our needs. Gradually we become independent. In adulthood, as we reach independence we are able to raise the next generation. At the end of our lives we may become less able to care for ourselves and be more dependent on others again.

Even at our most independent, however, we are still interdependent for the production of food, other essential services and for relationships. To be human is to be interdependent.

Recognising that as humans we are limited and interdependent helps us to recognise impairment and disability as part of human experience, not something strange or odd. Just as with any human experience there is joy as well as struggle in impairment.

In the Bible there are many references to the treatment of people with impairments. These include not reviling the deaf and not putting a stumbling block before the blind (Leviticus 19:14) to making straight paths so what is lame may not be put out of joint

(Hebrews 12:12-13). It is an issue of justice that the environment is accessible so people with impairments can participate in community life.

Introduction to Prejudice Issues - revision 156 2022_09_29

1 Corinthians 12:14-27 speaks of recognising, honouring and caring for the different parts of the body, all of which are necessary for health. 'To be members one of another' implies equality of relationship where people both give and receive. People living with a disability need to discover and exercise their gifts and an accessible environment makes this possible.

Creating Welcoming Churches

DISABILITY, SPIRITUALITY & FAITH NETWORK, AOTEAROA NEW ZEALAND INC

September 2014

c/o 37 William St, Petone

Lower Hutt 5012

NEW ZEALAND

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Writer and researcher: Reverend Vicki Terrell

Editor: Sarah Maclean www.wordsatwork.co.nz

The printed book may be purchased on their website: <http://www.dsfnetwork.org/projects/creating-welcoming-churches/>

Disability definitions

The term 'disability' covers a variety of situations.

<https://www.employment.govt.nz/workplace-policies/employment-for-disabled-people/disability-definitions-and-etiquette/>

Disability is a term covering personal impairments, activity limitations, and participation restrictions. The most common disability types for adults are physical and sensory disabilities.

Disability:

- can result from accident, illness, congenital disorders or genes.
- can be of many different kinds - physical, intellectual or mental health-related.
- may be visible or hidden, permanent or temporary and may have a little or major impact on a person's life.
- may affect mobility, ability to learn, or ability to communicate easily.

Most disabled people can do most things that people without disability can do.

Sometimes a person may need some form of adjustment or support (eg a guide dog or adapted technology) to help them manage the effect of their disability. No two people are the same, and even people with the same disability don't experience it in the same way.

Definitions of disability

The New Zealand Disability Strategy:

"Disability is not something individuals have. What individuals have are impairments. They may be physical, sensory, neurological, psychiatric, intellectual or other impairments...

Disability is the process which happens when one group of people create barriers by designing a world only for their way of living, taking no account of the impairments other people have..."

Statistics NZ:

"any self-perceived limitation in activity resulting from a long-term condition or health problem; lasting longer or expected to last longer than six months or more and not completely eliminated by an assistive device".

The Human Rights Act 1993:

physical disability or impairment: physical illness: psychiatric illness: intellectual or psychological disability or impairment: any other loss or abnormality of psychological, physiological: or anatomical structure or function: reliance on a guide dog, wheelchair, or other remedial means: the presence in the body of organisms capable of causing illness.

The World Health Organisation:

"...any restriction or lack (resulting from an impairment) of ability to perform an activity in the manner of within the range considered normal for a human being". The perception of whether a disability exists remains that of the staff member concerned - individuals choose to self-identify as having a disability.

The UN Secretariat for the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities:

Persons with disabilities include those who have long-term physical, mental, intellectual or sensory impairments which in interaction with various barriers may hinder their full and effective participation in society on an equal basis with others.

Able Fragility: Why It's So Hard to Talk to Able People About Able-ism

Dr. Robin DiAngelo explains why able people implode when talking about abled/differently abled.

This article is based on:

White Fragility: Why It's So Hard to Talk to White People About Racism

Dr. Robin DiAngelo explains why white people implode when talking about race.

April 9, 2015 by [Dr. Robin DiAngelo](#)

<https://goodmenproject.com/featured-content/white-fragility-why-its-so-hard-to-talk-to-white-people-about-racism-twlm/>

Most of the issues related to social marginalisation apply across all forms of marginalisation in very similar ways. This relationship is clearly demonstrated by taking an article about White Fragility and converting into an article about Able-ism, just by substituting (find and replace) the relevant words.

Dr. DiAngelo's original article about white fragility is presented after this modified copy. I suggest after reading this modified article about Able Fragility, to read the original article about White Fragility. By reading these articles together, shows how similar underlying human issues apply to all areas of prejudice, unfair treatment of groups of people and our abuse of the "Other".

The following replacements were made, to change the subject from White Fragility about race, to Able Fragility:

White to able

racism to able-ism

racial to ability

racist to able-ist

race to abled/differently abled

United States to New Zealand

People of color to differently abled people

person of color to differently abled person

letter u added where needed to convert american to proper english.....



Dr. Robin DiAngelo explains why able people implode when talking about abled/differently abled.

I am able. I have spent years studying what it means to be able in a society that proclaims abled/differently abled meaningless, yet is deeply divided by abled/differently abled. This is what I have learned: Any able person living in the New Zealand will develop opinions about abled/differently abled simply by swimming in the water of our culture. But mainstream sources—schools, textbooks, media—don't provide us with the multiple perspectives we need.

Yes, we will develop strong emotionally laden opinions, but they will not be informed opinions. Our socialization renders us ability-ly illiterate. When you add a lack of humility to that illiteracy (**because we don't know what we don't know**), you get the break-down we so often see when trying to engage able people in meaningful conversations about abled/differently abled.

Mainstream dictionary definitions reduce able-ism to individual ability prejudice and the intentional actions that result. The people that commit these intentional acts are deemed bad, and those that don't are good. If we are against able-ism and unaware of committing able-ist acts, we can't be able-ist; able-ism and being a good person have become mutually exclusive. But this definition does little to explain how ability hierarchies are consistently reproduced.

Yes, we will develop strong emotionally laden opinions, but they will not be informed opinions. Our socialization renders us ability-ly illiterate.

Social scientists understand able-ism as a multidimensional and highly adaptive *system*—a system that ensures an unequal distribution of resources between ability groups. Because ables built and dominate all significant institutions, (often at the expense of and on the uncompensated labour of other groups), their interests are embedded in the foundation of New Zealand society.

While individual ables may be against able-ism, they still benefit from the distribution of resources controlled by their group. Yes, an individual differently abled person can sit at the tables of power, but the overwhelming majority of decision-makers will be able. Yes, able people can have problems and face barriers, but systematic able-ism won't be one of them. This distinction—between individual prejudice and a system of unequal institutional-ised ability power—is fundamental. One cannot understand how able-ism functions in the New Zealand today if one ignores group power relations.

We have organised society to reproduce and reinforce our ability interests and perspectives. Further, we are centred in all matters deemed normal, universal, benign, neutral and good.

This systemic and institutional control allows those of us who are able in North America to live in a social environment that protects and insulates us from [abled/differently abled-based stress](#). We have organised society to reproduce and reinforce our ability interests and perspectives. Further, we are centred in all matters deemed normal, universal, benign, neutral and good. Thus, we move through a wholly ability--ised world with an inability--ised identity (e.g. able people can represent all of humanity, differently abled people can only represent their ability selves).

Challenges to this identity become highly stressful and even intolerable. The following are examples of the kinds of challenges that trigger ability stress for able people:

- Suggesting that a able person's viewpoint comes from a ability--ised frame of reference (challenge to objectivity);
- Differently abled people talking directly about their own ability perspectives (challenge to able taboos on talking openly about abled/differently abled);
- Differently abled people choosing not to protect the ability feelings of able people in regards to abled/differently abled (challenge to able ability expectations and need/entitlement to ability comfort);
- Differently abled people not being willing to tell their stories or answer questions about their ability experiences (challenge to the expectation that [differently abled people will serve us](#));
- A fellow able not providing agreement with one's ability perspective (challenge to able solidarity);
- Receiving feedback that one's behavior had a able-ist impact (challenge to able ability innocence);
- Suggesting that group membership is significant (challenge to individualism);
- An acknowledgment that access is unequal between ability groups (challenge to meritocracy);
- Being presented with a differently abled person in a position of leadership (challenge to able authority);
- Being presented with information about other ability groups through, for example, movies in which differently abled people drive the action but are not in stereotypical roles, or multicultural education (challenge to able centrality).

Not often encountering these challenges, we withdraw, defend, cry, argue, minimize, ignore, and in other ways push back to regain our ability position and equilibrium. I term that push back *able fragility*.

This concept came out of my on-going experience leading discussions on abled/differently abled, able-ism, able privilege and able supremacy with primarily able audiences. It became clear over time that able people have extremely low thresholds for enduring any discomfort associated with challenges to our ability worldviews.

We can manage the first round of challenge by ending the discussion through platitudes—usually something that starts with “People just need to,” or “Abled/differently abled doesn't really have any meaning to me,” or “Everybody's able-ist.” Scratch any further on that surface, however, and we fall apart.

It became clear over time that able people have extremely low thresholds for enduring any discomfort associated with challenges to our ability worldviews.

Social-ised into a deeply internal-ised sense of superiority and entitlement that we are either not consciously aware of or can never admit to ourselves, we become highly fragile in conversations about abled/differently abled. We experience a challenge to our ability worldview as a challenge to our very identities as good, moral people. It also challenges our sense of rightful place in the hierarchy. Thus, we perceive any attempt to connect us to the system of able-ism as a very unsettling and unfair moral offense.

The following patterns make it difficult for able people to understand able-ism as a *system* and lead to the dynamics of able fragility. While they do not apply to every able person, they are well-documented overall:

Segregation: Most ables live, grow, play, learn, love, work and die primarily in social and geographic ability segregation. Yet, our society does not teach us to see this as a loss. Pause for a moment and consider the magnitude of this message: We lose nothing of value by having no cross-ability relationships. In fact, the abler our schools and neighborhoods are, the more likely they are to be seen as “good.” The implicit message is that there is no inherent value in the presence or perspectives of differently abled people. This is

an example of the relentless messages of able superiority that circulate all around us, shaping our identities and worldviews.

The Good/Bad Binary: The most effective adaptation of able-ism over time is the idea that able-ism is conscious bias held by mean people. If we are not aware of having negative thoughts about differently abled people, don't tell able-ist jokes, are nice people, and even have friends of different ability, then we cannot be able-ist. Thus, a person is either able-ist or not able-ist; if a person is able-ist, that person is bad; if a person is not able-ist, that person is good. Although able-ism does of course occur in individual acts, these acts are part of a larger system that we all participate in. The focus on individual incidences prevents the analysis that is necessary in order to challenge this larger system. The good/bad binary is the fundamental misunderstanding driving able defensiveness about being connected to able-ism. We simply do not understand how socialization and implicit bias work.

Individualism: Ables are taught to see themselves as individuals, rather than as part of a ability group. Individualism enables us to deny that able-ism is structured into the fabric of society. This erases our history and hides the way in which wealth has accumulated over generations and benefits us, *as a group*, today. It also allows us to distance ourselves from the history and actions of our group. Thus we get very irate when we are "accused" of able-ism, because as individuals, we are "different" from other able people and expect to be seen as such; we find intolerable any suggestion that our behaviour or perspectives are typical of our group as a whole.

In fact, the abler our schools and neighbourhoods are, the more likely they are to be seen as "good." The implicit message is that there is no inherent value in the presence or perspectives of differently abled people .

Entitlement to ability comfort: In the dominant position, ables are almost always abilityly comfortable and thus have developed unchallenged expectations to remain so. We have not had to build tolerance for ability discomfort and thus when ability discomfort arises, ables typically respond as if something is "wrong," and blame the person or event that triggered the discomfort (usually a person of color). This blame results in a socially-sanctioned array of responses towards the perceived source of the discomfort, including: penalization; retaliation; isolation and refusal to continue engagement. Since able-ism is necessarily uncomfortable in that it is oppressive, able insistence on ability comfort guarantees able-ism will not be faced except in the most superficial of ways.

Ability Arrogance: Most ables have a very limited understanding of able-ism because we have not been trained to think in complex ways about it and because it benefits able dominance not to do so. Yet, we have no compunction about debating the knowledge of people who have thought complexly about abled/differently abled. Ables generally feel free to dismiss these informed perspectives rather than have the humility to acknowledge that they are unfamiliar, reflect on them further, or seek more information.

Ability Belonging: Able people enjoy a deeply internalised, largely unconscious sense of ability belonging in New Zealand society. In virtually any situation or image deemed valuable in dominant society, ables belong. The interruption of ability belonging is rare and thus destabilizing and frightening to ables and usually avoided.

Psychic freedom: Because abled/differently abled is constructed as residing in differently abled people, ables don't bear the social burden of abled/differently abled. We move easily through our society without a sense of ourselves as ability-ised. Abled/differently abled is for differently abled people to think about—it is what happens to "them"—they can bring it up if it is an issue for them (although if they do, we can dismiss it as a personal problem, the abled/differently abled card, or the reason for their problems). This

allows ables much more psychological energy to devote to other issues and prevents us from developing the stamina to sustain attention on an issue as charged and uncomfortable as abled/differently abled.

Because abled/differently abled is constructed as residing in differently abled people, ables don't bear the social burden of abled/differently abled. We move easily through our society without a sense of ourselves as ability-ised.

Constant messages that we are more valuable: Living in an able dominant context, we receive constant messages that we are better and more important than differently abled people. For example: our centrality in history textbooks, historical representations and perspectives; our centrality in media and advertising; our teachers, role-models, heroes and heroines; everyday discourse on “good” neighbourhoods and schools and who is in them; popular TV shows centred around friendship circles that are all able; religious iconography that depicts God, Adam and Eve, and other key figures as able. While one may explicitly reject the notion that one is inherently better than another, one cannot avoid internalizing the message of able superiority, as it is ubiquitous in mainstream culture.

These privileges and the able fragility that results prevent us from listening to or comprehending the perspectives of differently abled people and bridging cross-ability divides. The antidote to able fragility is on-going and life-long, and includes sustained engagement, humility, and education. We can begin by:

Being willing to tolerate the discomfort associated with an honest appraisal and discussion of our internalised superiority and ability privilege.

Challenging our own ability reality by acknowledging ourselves as ability beings with a particular and limited perspective on abled/differently abled.

Attempting to understand the ability realities of differently abled people through authentic interaction rather than through the media or unequal relationships.

Taking action to address our own able-ism, the able-ism of other ables, and the able-ism embedded in our institutions—e.g., get educated and act.

The antidote to able fragility is on-going and life-long, and includes sustained engagement, humility, and education.

“Getting it” when it comes to abled/differently abled and able-ism challenges our very identities as good able people. It's an ongoing and often painful process of seeking to uncover our socialization at its very roots. It asks us to rebuild this identity in new and often uncomfortable ways. But I can testify that it is also the most exciting, powerful, intellectually stimulating and emotionally fulfilling journey I have ever undertaken. It has impacted every aspect of my life—personal and professional.

I have a much deeper and more complex understanding of how society works. I can challenge much more able-ism in my daily life, and I have developed cherished and fulfilling cross-ability friendships I did not have before.

I do not expect able-ism to end in my lifetime, and I know that I continue to have problematic able-ist patterns and perspectives. Yet, I am also confident that I do less harm to differently abled people than I used to. This is not a minor point of growth, for it impacts my lived experience and that of the differently abled people who interact with me. If you are able I urge you to take the first step—let go of your ability certitude and reach for humility.

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White Fragility: Why It's So Hard to Talk to White People About Racism

Dr. Robin DiAngelo explains why white people implode when talking about race.

April 9, 2015 by [Dr. Robin DiAngelo](#)

<https://goodmenproject.com/featured-content/white-fragility-why-its-so-hard-to-talk-to-white-people-about-racism-twlm/>



Dr. Robin DiAngelo explains why white people implode when talking about race.

I am white. I have spent years studying what it means to be white in a society that proclaims race meaningless, yet is deeply divided by race. This is what I have learned: Any white person living in the United States will develop opinions about race simply by swimming in the water of our culture. But mainstream sources—schools, textbooks, media—don't provide us with the multiple perspectives we need.

Yes, we will develop strong emotionally laden opinions, but they will not be informed opinions. Our socialization renders us racially illiterate. When you add a lack of humility to that illiteracy (because we

don't know what we don't know), you get the break-down we so often see when trying to engage white people in meaningful conversations about race.

Mainstream dictionary definitions reduce racism to individual racial prejudice and the intentional actions that result. The people that commit these intentional acts are deemed bad, and those that don't are good.

If we are against racism and unaware of committing racist acts, we can't be racist; racism and being a good person have become mutually exclusive. But this definition does little to explain how racial hierarchies are consistently reproduced.

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Social scientists understand racism as a multidimensional and highly adaptive *system*—a system that ensures an unequal distribution of resources between racial groups. Because whites built and dominate all significant institutions, (often at the expense of and on the uncompensated labor of other groups), their interests are embedded in the foundation of U.S. society.

While individual whites may be against racism, they still benefit from the distribution of resources controlled by their group. Yes, an individual person of color can sit at the tables of power, but the overwhelming majority of decision-makers will be white.

Yes, white people can have problems and face barriers, but systematic racism won't be one of them. This distinction—between individual prejudice and a system of unequal institutionalized racial power—is fundamental. One cannot understand how racism functions in the U.S. today if one ignores group power relations.

We have organized society to reproduce and reinforce our racial interests and perspectives. Further, we are centered in all matters deemed normal, universal, benign, neutral and good.

This systemic and institutional control allows those of us who are white in North America to live in a social environment that protects and insulates us from [race-based stress](#).

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Thus, we move through a wholly racialized world with an unracialized identity (e.g. white people can represent all of humanity, people of color can only represent their racial selves).

Challenges to this identity become highly stressful and even intolerable. The following are examples of the kinds of challenges that trigger racial stress for white people:

Suggesting that a white person's viewpoint comes from a racialized frame of reference (challenge to objectivity);

People of color talking directly about their own racial perspectives (challenge to white taboos on talking openly about race);

People of color choosing not to protect the racial feelings of white people in regards to race (challenge to white racial expectations and need/entitlement to racial comfort);

People of color not being willing to tell their stories or answer questions about their racial experiences (challenge to the expectation that **people of color will serve us**);

A fellow white not providing agreement with one's racial perspective (challenge to white solidarity);

Receiving feedback that one's behavior had a racist impact (challenge to white racial innocence);

Suggesting that group membership is significant (challenge to individualism);

An acknowledgment that access is unequal between racial groups (challenge to meritocracy);

Being presented with a person of color in a position of leadership (challenge to white authority);

Being presented with information about other racial groups through, for example, movies in which people of color drive the action but are not in stereotypical roles, or multicultural education (challenge to white centrality).

Not often encountering these challenges, we withdraw, defend, cry, argue, minimize, ignore, and in other ways push back to regain our racial position and equilibrium. I term that push back *white fragility*.

This concept came out of my on-going experience leading discussions on race, racism, white privilege and white supremacy with primarily white audiences. It became clear over time that white people have extremely low thresholds for enduring any discomfort associated with challenges to our racial worldviews.

We can manage the first round of challenge by ending the discussion through platitudes—usually something that starts with “People just need to,” or “Race doesn’t really have any meaning to me,” or “Everybody’s racist.” Scratch any further on that surface, however, and we fall apart.

Socialized into a deeply internalized sense of superiority and entitlement that we are either not consciously aware of or can never admit to ourselves, we become highly fragile in conversations about race.

It became clear over time that white people have extremely low thresholds for enduring any discomfort associated with challenges to our racial worldviews.

We experience a challenge to our racial worldview as a challenge to our very identities as good, moral people.

It also challenges our sense of rightful place in the hierarchy. Thus, we perceive any attempt to connect us to the system of racism as a very unsettling and unfair moral offense.

The following patterns make it difficult for white people to understand racism as a *system* and lead to the dynamics of white fragility. While they do not apply to every white person, they are well-documented overall:

Segregation: Most whites live, grow, play, learn, love, work and die primarily in social and geographic racial segregation. Yet, our society does not teach us to see this as a loss. Pause for a moment and consider the magnitude of this message: We lose nothing of value by having no cross-racial relationships.

In fact, the whiter our schools and neighborhoods are, the more likely they are to be seen as “good.” The implicit message is that there is no inherent value in the presence or perspectives of people of Color. This is an example of the relentless messages of white superiority that circulate all around us, shaping our identities and worldviews.

The Good/Bad Binary: The most effective adaptation of racism over time is the idea that racism is conscious bias held by mean people. If we are not aware of having negative thoughts about people of color, don’t tell racist jokes, are nice people, and even have friends of color, then we cannot be racist.

Thus, a person is either racist or not racist; if a person is racist, that person is bad; if a person is not racist, that person is good. Although racism does of course occur in individual acts, these acts are part of a larger system that we all participate in. The focus on individual incidences prevents the analysis that is necessary in order to challenge this larger system. The good/bad binary is the fundamental misunderstanding driving white defensiveness about being connected to racism. We simply do not understand how socialization and implicit bias work.

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It also allows us to distance ourselves from the history and actions of our group. Thus we get very irate when we are “accused” of racism, because as individuals, we are “different” from other white people and expect to be seen as such; we find intolerable any suggestion that our behavior or perspectives are typical of our group as a whole.

In fact, the whiter our schools and neighborhoods are, the more likely they are to be seen as “good.” The implicit message is that there is no inherent value in the presence or perspectives of people of Color.

Entitlement to racial comfort: In the dominant position, whites are almost always racially comfortable and thus have developed unchallenged expectations to remain so. We have not had to build tolerance for racial discomfort and thus when racial discomfort arises, whites typically respond as if something is “wrong,” and blame the person or event that triggered the discomfort (usually a person of color).

This blame results in a socially-sanctioned array of responses towards the perceived source of the discomfort, including: penalization; retaliation; isolation and refusal to continue engagement. Since racism is necessarily uncomfortable in that it is oppressive, white insistence on racial comfort guarantees racism will not be faced except in the most superficial of ways.

Racial Arrogance: Most whites have a very limited understanding of racism because we have not been trained to think in complex ways about it and because it benefits white dominance not to do so. Yet, we have no compunction about debating the knowledge of people who have thought complexly about race. Whites generally feel free to dismiss these informed perspectives rather than have the humility to acknowledge that they are unfamiliar, reflect on them further, or seek more information.

Racial Belonging: White people enjoy a deeply internalized, largely unconscious sense of racial belonging in U.S. society. In virtually any situation or image deemed valuable in dominant society, whites belong. The interruption of racial belonging is rare and thus destabilizing and frightening to whites and usually avoided.

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Constant messages that we are more valuable: Living in a white dominant context, we receive constant messages that we are better and more important than people of color.

For example: our centrality in history textbooks, historical representations and perspectives; our centrality in media and advertising; our teachers, role-models, heroes and heroines; everyday discourse on “good” neighborhoods and schools and who is in them; popular TV shows centered around friendship circles that are all white; religious iconography that depicts God, Adam and Eve, and other key figures as white.

Because race is constructed as residing in people of color, whites don't bear the social burden of race. We move easily through our society without a sense of ourselves as racialized.

While one may explicitly reject the notion that one is inherently better than another, one cannot avoid internalizing the message of white superiority, as it is ubiquitous in mainstream culture.

These privileges and the white fragility that results prevent us from listening to or comprehending the perspectives of people of color and bridging cross-racial divides. The antidote to white fragility is on-going and life-long, and includes sustained engagement, humility, and education. We can begin by:

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Challenging our own racial reality by acknowledging ourselves as racial beings with a particular and limited perspective on race.

Attempting to understand the racial realities of people of color through authentic interaction rather than through the media or unequal relationships.

Taking action to address our own racism, the racism of other whites, and the racism embedded in our institutions—e.g., get educated and act.

The antidote to white fragility is on-going and life-long, and includes sustained engagement, humility, and education.

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It asks us to rebuild this identity in new and often uncomfortable ways. But I can testify that it is also the most exciting, powerful, intellectually stimulating and emotionally fulfilling journey I have ever undertaken. It has impacted every aspect of my life—personal and professional.

I have a much deeper and more complex understanding of how society works. I can challenge much more racism in my daily life, and I have developed cherished and fulfilling cross-racial friendships I did not have before.

I do not expect racism to end in my lifetime, and I know that I continue to have problematic racist patterns and perspectives. Yet, I am also confident that I do less harm to people of color than I used to. This is not a minor point of growth, for it impacts my lived experience and that of the people of color who interact with me. If you are white I urge you to take the first step—let go of your racial certitude and reach for humility.

Social Model of Disability - gives links to many YouTube videos

This chapter gives links to many YouTube videos, that are helpful towards understanding the Social Model of Disability.

The objective for this Appendix is to provide 1 - 10 paragraphs of comments on each video, so that readers can quickly see which videos meet their training needs and interests. This is quite important, towards encouraging disabled women to understand the world around us and obtain the well-being we are entitled to.

It has been attempted to list these videos roughly from most valuable, to least valuable, to a new learner in this area. However, obviously different learners have different needs, so the order in which these videos are listed should be seen as just one person's opinion and not taken too seriously.

The Social Model of Disability by McGilIOSD 1 minute 59 seconds

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=g0gxRyDmBxl>

Natalina Martiniello BA English literature talks about exclusion and quietly illustrates the possible impact in the viewer, of the viewer's fear of being in such a situation. If the viewer has such fear, then this may lead to stigma, where one person suffers, due to other people's lack of understanding and compassion (aka ignorance). Natalina has a cosmetically deformed disfigured face.

Removing the Stigma of Disability | Adam Pearson | TEDxBrighton

21,519 views
Mar 24, 2017

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=aOmtAJkzZbk>



Adam has a severe facial deformity and speaks confidently

Adam will share important lessons he has learned while carving out a career for himself in the public eye, whilst overcoming the stigma attached to his disfigurements. Adam Pearson is a Presenter, Actor and

University of Brighton 2016 Alumnus of the Year. With a passion for story telling and exploring the world around him Adam firmly believes that every human has a duty to leave this world in a better state than when they arrived in it by leaving an impact on the world and, by the same token, letting this world impact us. Life is 10% what happens to you and 90% how you decide to handle it! This talk was given at a TEDx event using the TED conference format but independently organized by a local community. Learn more at <http://ted.com/tedx>
disfigured face

My Body Doesn't Oppress Me, Society Does 5 minutes 8 seconds

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=7r0MiGWQY2g>

Barnard Center for Research on Women

Patty Berne and Stacey Milbern present a social model of disability, explaining how universal design, adaptive devices, and meeting people's access needs can limit the social, economic, and physical barriers that render physical impairments disabling in an ableist society. Milbern notes that focusing on individual impairments "lets society off the hook" for the structural oppression that renders some bodies and lives more valuable than others. Berne says "we are seen as disposable," noting that the oppression that society ascribes to the individual body and disability is in fact a violent social construction.

This video is part of the series No Body is Disposable, produced by Sins Invalid and the Barnard Center for Research on Women. Video by Dean Spade and Hope Dector. Learn more about the series at <http://bit.ly/nobodyisdisposable>

For more on the intersections between ableism, white supremacy, colonialism, capitalism, and heteropatriarchy, and disability justice tools and tactics that center disabled people of color and queer, trans, and gender non-conforming disabled people, visit <http://sinsinvalid.org> or download the Sins Invalid's "Skin, Tooth, and Bone: A Disability Justice Primer" at <http://bit.ly/djprimer>.

About PWDA What is the social model of disability 1 minute 44 seconds

This is a silent sign language presentation. This effectively puts hearing listeners into the disabled category, to some extent and it helps teach that in some respects we are all disabled and in some extents we are able. This shows the meaning of "other".

The Social Model of Disability Mel Harrison PWDA member Australia 3 minutes 36 seconds

Mel Harrison clearly shows how issues of the range of people's capabilities can be viewed as disabilities or as a challenge to provide equal access for all members of society.

Models of disability by Micheline Mason 12 minutes 19 seconds

Beautiful picture of happy, smiling baby, surrounded by horrified adults, finger pointing its your problem.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=jGeHysMzmuE> 12 minutes 19 seconds

The Social Model of Disability 2 Maeve Curtin Public Policy Researcher 2 minutes 12 seconds

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=-9hvP82UJI0>

Maeve Curtin explains the difference between the “medical model” and “social model” of disability and the impact of these views.

Additional Notes, Links and Updates to the Video: Maeve Curtin encourages viewers to think about those to whom you can reach out for suggestions about potential job opportunities. That is, your classmates and school alumni, friends, church members, family, neighbors, etc. People who are already in your network are invested in your success! Leveraging social media platforms is an opportunity to build and expand your network even further. Relationships and connections can – and do - help people get jobs. Often, “it’s who you know”...

Maeve Curtin is currently a student at the University of Virginia Frank Batten School of Leadership and Public Policy, working on completion of her master’s degree in Public Policy. She is an energetic individual driven to serve those around her to implement projects that best advocate for and address the needs of diverse communities. Maeve served Uniquely the Same as a research intern in the summer of 2018. Her guided research has yielded data relative to social media and the social capital that can be garnered from “cashing in” that social capital in order to advance employment for individuals affected by disability. Maeve has been involved with the “Best Buddies” Program, serving on the International Young Leader Council.

Social Model of Disability NDACA National Disability Arts Collection 2 minutes 43 seconds

Excellent introduction to disability as viewed by the Medical Model and the Social Model of Disability. The presentation uses effective visuals.

Introduction to Prejudice Issues - revision 156 2022_09_29

The Social Model of Disability - by Toucan Diversity animation Winchester Science Centre 3 minutes 31 seconds

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=WbFZvlcwqt4>

Good, simple introduction.

What is a psychosocial model of disability Mental Health Europe 3 minutes 30 seconds

UNCRPD UN Convention on Rights of People with Disabilities discussed relative to mental health conditions.

Living with an Invisible Disability | Sarah Skinner | TEDxYouth@Dayton 17 minutes 16 seconds

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Uh7ki3lbnRI>

Disabled Students Campaign – Social Model of Disability with Mike Oliver 7 minutes 41 seconds

Professor Mike Oliver talks about the last 30 years of people's attitudes to providing services and access for people with disabilities in UK. He speaks to encourage students with disabilities to fight when barriers are unnecessarily or thoughtlessly erected in front of them.

Professor Mike Oliver Kicking Down the Doors from Borstal Boy to University Professor in 38 minutes

Professor Mike Oliver talks about his personal story. As a working class boy, he got into Grammar School. (In UK this was quite unusual for a working class child to gain entry.) He found school rather boring and kicked up. When he left, he discovered to his horror that work was even more boring ! At 18 years old, his neck was broken in an accident. He suddenly had to face life afresh. He went to university and found that many barriers existed to being able to fully attend to a student's life. He gained assistance and progressed through university life.

He says "If we don't do it for ourselves, society will never get it right. Do it yourself !".

Reimagining Disability & Inclusive Education | Jan Wilson | TEDxUniversityofTulsa 16 minutes 13 seconds

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=CtRY_1mZWWg

Introduction to Prejudice Issues - revision 156 2022_09_29
Good discussion of able versus disabled, as a broad introduction.

Models of Disability Dr. Ruth Nelson Social and Behavioral Sciences at Bethel Univ. 12 minutes 36 seconds

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=r3ezHVM3XOE>

Dr. Ruth Nelson gives a detailed and excellent overview, from biblical models of disability, to Cult of Normalcy, to the Medical Model and the Social Model.

She discusses the Functional Rehabilitative model as applied after WW1 and WW2. She also briefly covers the Psychological Model of Watermeyer and the concept of Individual Uniqueness.

She also briefly discusses how we naturally tend to react with fear to issues and people that we are not familiar with. This can easily slide into stigma and doing harm, when we put a person into the "other" category.

Psychological Constructs of Inclusion 8 minutes 58 seconds

By Ruth Nelson, PhD, Professor

(2020, March 4) This video looks at psychological research that helps us understand what type of contact promotes authentic inclusion of people with disabilities and reduces implicit/explicit biases. Older and current research is shared about types of contact that promotes inclusion.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=y6zjOaaPnOw>

The Social Model of Disability - Autistamatic Report by Autistamatic 11 minutes 36 seconds

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=6AWIaTHcnTE>

Very careful introduction to Social model of Disability and detailed comparison of the impacts of the Social Model and the Medical Model of Disability.

Refers to Mike Oliver's contributions in 1983.

Why might a person choose not to be cured?

The Medical Model has led to eugenics and the murder of millions of people, not just by crazy dictators, but by our own doctors.

Social Model of Disability Shape Arts

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=24KE__OCKMw 2 minutes 43 seconds

animation with soft woman's voice

Inclusion, belonging and the disability revolution: Jennie Fenton at TEDxBellingham

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=VAM9nh8WC-8>

Mik's Beginners Guide To The Social Model of Disability- 6 minutes 44 seconds

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=XGXqXlsxiSA>

Mik Scarlet introduces us to his wheelchair. He is a Equality and Inclusive Service Trainer.

Mik has produced a large series of videos covering many topics related to making the best of disability conditions. I highly recommend them.

Let's talk about the Social Model of Disability [CC] Robyn Lambird Cerebral Palsy 9 minutes 37 seconds

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=OZCPztgvrqU>

Robyn Lambird speaks in a very lively manner about the Social Model of Disability

I am not my label | Lily Sughrue | TEDxLincoln

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=NJBnb2r8pBY>

Social model of disability and disability rights Dr Brian Watermeyer by UCT CILT 10 minutes 16 seconds

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ODSb-vxC6vg>

Dr Brian Watermeyer is a psychologist with poor sight. He talks about the Psychoanalytic Model of Disability and the ethics of individual uniqueness. He gives excellent ideas, in a talking only, no visuals presentation.

Social Model Animation by Geoff Adams-Spink reverses ableism disableism

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=9s3NZaLhcc4>

Models of Disability 2 Dr Miro Griffiths Sociologist Uni Leeds 27 minutes 26 seconds

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=l4MMiqAL0U8>

Dr Miro Griffiths discusses the oppression and discrimination that people with disabilities often face. He speaks to still pictures.

I Am Not A Monster: Schizophrenia | Cecilia McGough | TEDxPSU

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=xbagFzcyNiM>

Discusses her life experiences and making the most of her abilities.

Ask an Autistic #16 - Is Autism a Disability 12 minutes 11 seconds

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=EKE3PT2_ynU

Excellent presentation What is a disability? Are autistic people disabled? What is the social model of disability? Why is cure culture harmful? What is the Neurodiversity movement all about?

Person-First Language, Etiquette, and Medical and Social Model of Disability 1 hour 1 minute

This Stephens College presentation has excellent content, but is somewhat let down by the quality of presentation. The message is very important, if people with disabilities are to be sensibly treated with care and respect, as everyone deserves.

Models of Disabilities Part 1- Understanding Impairment, Disability & Handicap- Dr- Akhilesh Kumar 15 minutes 40 seconds

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=eUvCaoeGxvE>

Assistant Professor

Vardhman Mahaveer Open University

Kota, Rajasthan

Dr- Akhilesh Kumar gives a very detailed and careful discussion about disability issues. His accent and not perfect english may be a barrier to some listeners. He puts a lot of text on screen so this helps in understanding.

Beyond biomedical and social models of disability Outline of a cultural-historical model Associate Professor Louise Bøttcher Monash

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=5sCT0Myo640>

Associate Professor Louise Bøttcher will introduce a disability model based on Vygotsky's cultural-historical theory of how human development is formed through a dialectical process between biological maturation and participation in cultural forms.

Excellent overview

Professor Tom Shakespeare broad overview of social model 2 minutes 23 seconds

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=aqJLRnqd5JE>

Tom Shakespeare speaks on the Social Model of Disability- 1 hour 37 minutes

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=hBhVzFI-fAU>

Professor Thomas Shakespeare - Disability as identity, full keynote speech 45minutes 29seconds

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=QMPb_554c5o

Who I am - do I want to be cured? Identity

Colin Barnes The Social Model 11 minutes 23 seconds

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=mXuiP-n1h8s>

Disabled People Against Cuts

Professor Colin Barnes talks about the social model of disability and the myths and misconceptions that have been wrongly attributed to it. The video was made for the Disabled People against Cuts (DPAC) social model seminar in 2013 Excellent.

web: www.dpac.uk.net

twitter: @Dis_PPL_Protest

Social and Medical Models of Disability & DID

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=5KHdY5GoJJ4>

Silver talks about Disability Justice and Dissociative Identity Disorder (DID).

She speaks very fast. Some viewers may find it helpful to turn on captions in YouTube, or to slow down the viewing.

The Rings System

More on social model of disability:

Sins invalid on social model of disability (GOOD!!!):

<https://youtu.be/7r0MiGWQY2g>

Imagine a world built for wheelchair users, who would be disabled then?: <https://youtu.be/9s3NZaLhcc4> (good example of how society is built for and caters towards a certain type of bodymind) (also nice short and sweet - really recommend)

Timestamps that are Good and Important when you can't focus for 17 mins straight:

Why social model of disability is important: 4:13

Medical model NEEDS to be a choice: 6:44

Intersections with DID: 7:51

What if we were accepted as multiple, as who we are?: 14:28

Silver talks about the social and medical models of disability, how they intersect with disabled people's lives, and how they intersect with DID. Systems are so often only given medical supports and told to expect nothing more, so let's dream a little about a society that's fully accessible to DID/OSDD systems. This will be the first of a series of videos from us talking about the intersection of disability justice and multiplicity, and how we need to embrace a lot of key ideas put forth by the disability justice movement to really make change for plural folk in society.

Anyways, sorry for the background noise here. We just moved and don't know why it's caused or how to get rid of it yet!

Tumblr: <https://the-rings-system.tumblr.com>

Twitter: <https://twitter.com/TheRingsSystem>

Instagram: <https://www.instagram.com/theringssys...>

Music: <http://www.purple-planet.com>

Disabled people fare worse in their home, economic, and social lives

COMMENT: This chapter looks carefully at some quality of life issues for various disabled people, in quantitative detail. It only gives a very basic introduction and does not have sufficient detail to be able to fairly share out limited resources among disabled people. This chapter is a good introduction to the types of issues that need to be addressed, to achieve social equity.

– Media release

28 October 2020

James Weir, Wellington, 021 285 9191

publishing@stats.govt.nz

www.stats.govt.nz

Disabled people fare worse than non-disabled people across a range of outcomes relating to their homes and neighbourhoods, as well as their economic and social lives, Stats NZ said today.

A new report, *Measuring inequality for disabled New Zealanders: 2018*, brings together data from three Stats NZ surveys to explore differences between the lives of disabled and non-disabled people in 2018. It includes census data, which has been broken down by disability status for the first time.

This analysis was made possible by the inclusion of the [Washington Group Short Set of questions on functioning](#) in several Stats NZ surveys, including the 2018 Census.

Housing quality worse for disabled people

“A suitable, affordable, warm, and dry home is an essential contributor to people’s wellbeing,” wellbeing and housing statistics manager Dr Claire Bretherton said.

“But disabled people typically live in lower quality homes than non-disabled people.”

Visit our website to read this news story, report and infographic:

[Disabled people fare worse in their home, economic, and social lives](#)

[Measuring inequality for disabled New Zealanders: 2018 – report](#)

[The disability gap 2018 – infographic](#)

Ends

The Language of Violence by Lorri Mackness

Research is clear, disabled people are targeted for disproportionate levels of abuse and indicates social indifference is the root of “vulnerability”.

This abuse is reinforced and perpetuated by prevalent beliefs and assumptions that shape social attitudes towards disabled people.

As a result, marginalisation, invisibility and exclusion is developed and built into attitudes that create environments; reflected into social policies and social services for disabled women.

We understand Oppression is the theory and Discrimination is the actions.

We understand discrimination is systemic, reinforced and perpetuated using abuse and violence that in turn includes emotional, physical, financial, sexual abuse and these in turn include coercion and control and neglect.

The foundation underlying discrimination of disabled women in “Service Provision” is what I call **The Language of Violence.**

(i.e. the language of discrimination that reinforces and perpetuates domestic/sexual and other violence)

Terms

Service provision: the word/term is part of the medical model of disability and in itself interferes with the rights-based model; i.e. disabled women being considered as equal members of society

Carers/caregivers: Despite global statistics showing the disproportionate amount and extent of domestic, sexual and other violence targeted at disabled females, the medical model term, “carers” is used systemically through legislation and the service provision industry.

Vulnerable/Vulnerability: Does abuse disabled people experience come from individual ‘vulnerability’, or social indifference resulting from social attitudes towards disabled women. [A professional working in a USA prison overheard one inmate, (paedophile), tell another ...” get a job in the intellectual disability area when you get out; it’s easy pickings”] or service providers

Social indifference is turning a blind eye, not collecting disability data because you don't want to know how bad it is; not creating accessible police, justice, domestic violence services, refuges because disabled women are; invisible, liars, confused, forgetful, make up stories etc etc/not to be believed, only "carers"/support workers tell the truth

All women are vulnerable at times. Creating the concept of constant vulnerability as a condition built into particular groups not only reinforces the medical model of disability that disrespects, disempowers and disables women; it denies the rights inherent in the social/rights based model and prevents equality

Impairment: Using words that describe physiological difference as a diminishment, in a society founded on dualism, creates a hierarchy of ...better than...less than, the opposite of equality.

Family/Whanau Violence Act vs Domestic: Despite reports and requests from the disability community the Domestic Violence Act became the Family/Whanau Violence Act. Again, many disabled people instantly become invisible and exclude. The act is about how we live and many disabled people live in domestic households that are neither family or whanau based. As long as we live in a society that continues the Medical Model of Service Provision, creating institutional care, i.e. residential care, nursing homes etc, domestic households for many disabled people are not family or whanau based.

Support worker vs Support staff: Language is powerful and simple differences empower or disempowered. The first time I called members of my support team, my PA's my support staff, my agency advisor said"no, they are my staff"....

I said ..."yes they are your staff and I hire them from your agency and ACC pay on my behalf, so they are my staff too"....

Interesting how the best people in the best agencies still see thru the lens of the medical model....we are being taken care of, not people interviewing and hiring staff from agencies that have the particular staff we require.

Many prefer the term PA, i.e. Personal Assistant. In regard to Pay Equity, that description of a "carer" is a better description and more appropriate re equity.

Stockholm Syndrome

From Wikipedia, the free encyclopedia

https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Stockholm_syndrome

Stockholm syndrome is a condition in which hostages develop a psychological alliance with their captors during captivity.^[1] Emotional bonds may be formed between captors and captives, during intimate time together, but these are generally considered irrational in light of the danger or risk endured by the victims. Stockholm syndrome has never been included in the [Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders](#) or DSM, the standard tool for diagnostic of psychiatric illnesses and disorders, mainly due to the lack of a consistent body of academic research.^{[2][3][4]} The syndrome is extremely rare as noted by the U.S. [Federal Bureau of Investigation](#)'s Hostage Barricade Database System and [Law Enforcement Bulletin](#) estimating that fewer than 5% of kidnapping victims show evidence of Stockholm syndrome.^[5]

This term was first used by the media in 1973 when four hostages were taken during [a bank robbery](#) in [Stockholm, Sweden](#). The hostages defended their captors after being released and would not agree to testify in court against them.^[2] It was noted that in this case, however, the police were perceived to have acted with little care for the hostages' safety^[6], providing an alternative reason for their unwillingness to testify. Stockholm syndrome is paradoxical because the sympathetic sentiments that captives feel towards their captors are the opposite of the fear and disdain which an onlooker might feel towards the captors.

There are four key components that characterize Stockholm syndrome:

A hostage's development of positive feelings towards the captor

No previous relationship between hostage and captor

A refusal by hostages to cooperate with police forces and other government authorities (unless the captors themselves happen to be members of police forces or government authorities).

A hostage's belief in the humanity of the captor because they cease to perceive the captor as a threat when the victim holds the same values as the aggressor^[7]

Stockholm syndrome is a "contested illness" due to doubt about the legitimacy of the condition.^[2] It has also come to describe the reactions of some abuse victims beyond the context of kidnappings or hostage-taking. Actions and attitudes similar to those suffering from Stockholm syndrome have also been found in victims of sexual abuse, human trafficking, terror, and political and religious oppression.^[2]

....This article continues on Wikipedia.

Definition of Oppression, Discrimination and Intersectionality by Lorri Mackness

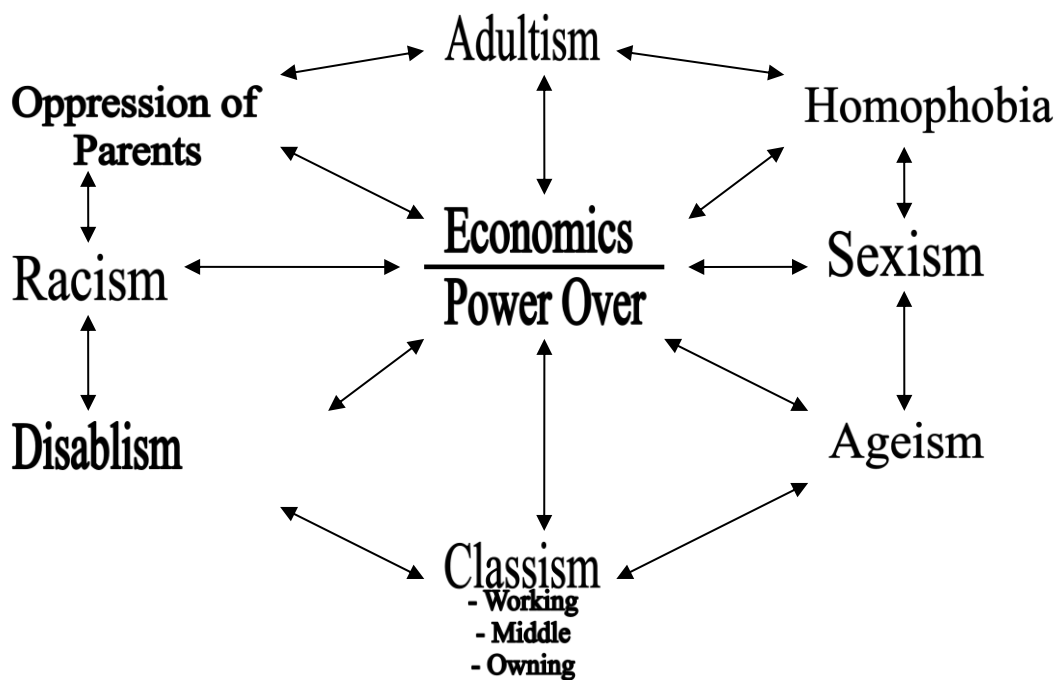
The definition of Oppression that we use systemic/systematic mistreatment of one group of people, by another group of people, that is perpetuated and reinforced through/by social institutions, e.g. government, family, schools, churches, etc.

This systemic/systematic mistreatment and the reinforcement is almost always an unaware process. When brought to awareness it is usually accompanied by denial.

When we look at oppression for the cycle it is, we can see that we are members of many different groups, i.e. intersectionality. In some, we are the oppressors, in others we are the oppressed. This means, in some we are abused, in some we are abusers.

This process/cycle has been instilled/installed into us while we are much too young to fight back. We grow up thinking that the way things are, is 'normal'. *We are taught to turn on each other instead of looking underneath to what is really going on – that our society is based on power over/powerlessness and economics instead of humane-ness.* When broken down the beliefs and behaviours that implement the process of oppression are simply a collection of individual 'distress' patterns i.e. individuals have their own unresolved hurts/experiences and the behaviours that evolve from them. When individuals come together, their individual distress patterns and beliefs become collective distress patterns and beliefs. The fact each person 'sees' things the same way reinforces the belief that 'this is how it is', this is what is 'normal' and 'natural'!

A Model of the Cycle



Internalised

Oppression:

The external mistreatment only has to happen x number of times before the person internalises the message e.g. an adult telling a child, they are stupid. After x amount of times the person internalises it and begins to tell themselves they are stupid.

SO,

Oppression is the theory (Internalised). Discrimination is the attitude/beliefs and actions that implement the theory. That is the practice.

Individual Distress Cycle.

Feelings

Chemical Physiological
healing process.

Versus

Negative Emotions

(Distress) Patterns of
behaviours created from
unhealed feelings.

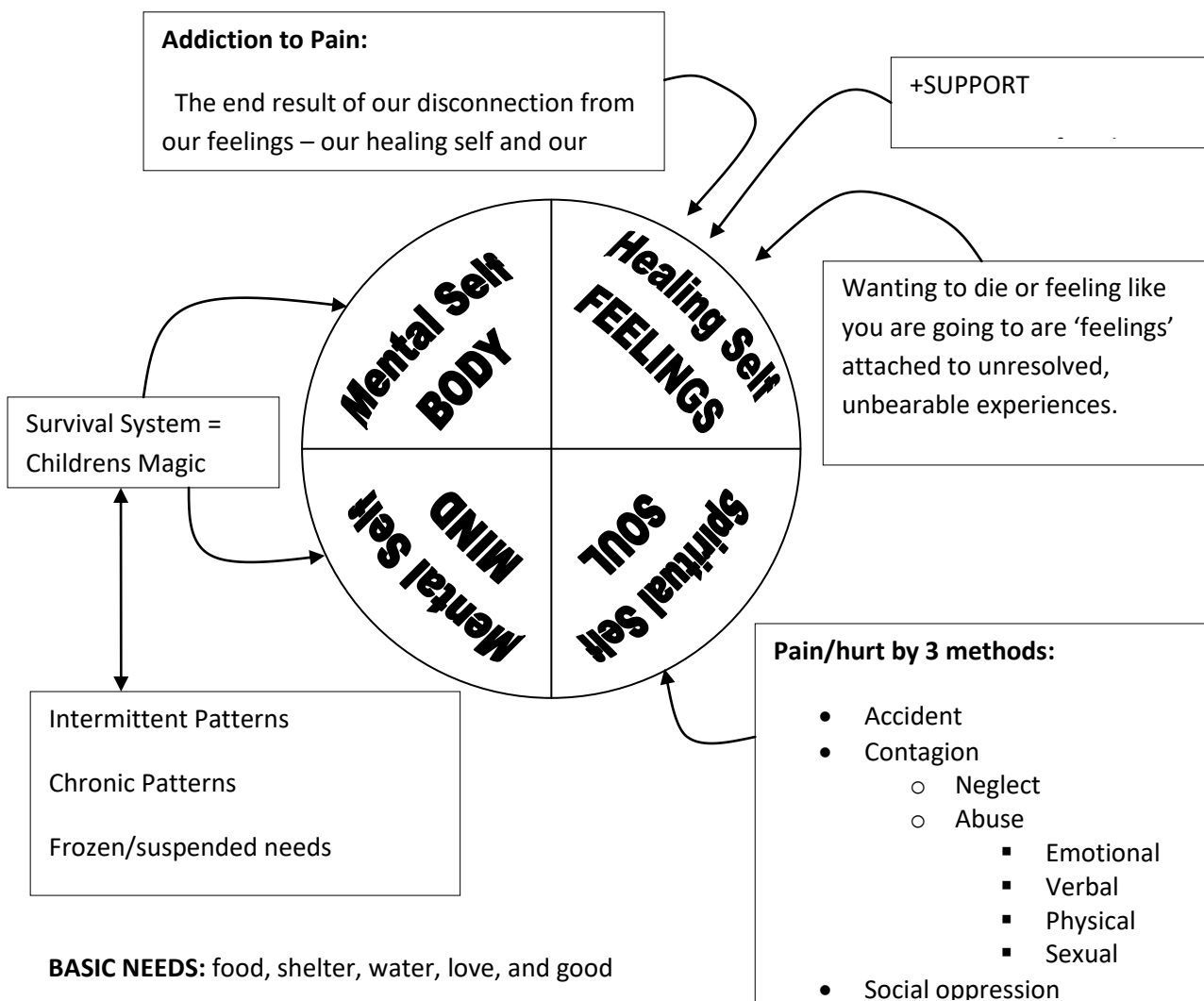
Pain

Inherent physiological
warning system that
something is wrong.

Versus

Suffering

Beliefs and Behaviours
created from unhealed
pain.



It's a travesty that society lets women be angry while silencing traumatised men

[Melanie Bennet](#)

Nov 18, 2021

https://medium.com/@mel_bennet/its-a-travesty-that-society-lets-women-be-angry-while-silencing-traumatised-men-e4fec9531a62

4 min read

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[Listen](#)

As a therapist, one of the things I see most commonly in the men and boys I work with is a feeling that anger and emotion should be avoided at all costs; that it makes them a bad person and needs to be controlled and suppressed. They feel anger is not acceptable, no matter what they have been put through by others. They need to control their emotions.

And it's not just society's internalised misandry making these men feel their anger is abnormal. It's professionals, too. Professionals who instead of seeking to find the cause of their patient's rage, silence it, suppress it, sometimes through words, and other times through a psychiatric diagnosis or an anger management course.

Recently, I worked with a teen boy who had been placed in care after being physically abused, emotionally abused, and sexually abused by his mother. She hated her ex husband and the boy reminded her of him. She took out her frustration on the poor boy. Understandably he was angry, upset, and refused to speak to anyone. He shouted and swore as well as broke things, was truant from school and would even set small fires. Shortly afterwards, he was referred for psychiatric evaluation.

I found this startling. After everything he had been through, isn't his anger totally normal and justified? Why would we suppress such a natural reaction to harm?

We should *all* be spitting with rage.

Believe it or not, this is a real problem in western societies and it is happening right now. Anger is being confused with aggression and violence, despite these feelings being very different. Men are not 'allowed' to show anger, as it is seen as toxic male behaviour and we have historically tended to suggest that traumatised or abused men need to "man up" and toughen up. Sort it out yourself. The reassuring shoulder has been reserved for girls.

For over 100 years, we have attacked men who have wanted to go their way. They have been vilified for not being tough enough, not wanting to marry women, being too assertive, being too interested in themselves — and, of course, the greatest sin of men and boys — not putting the needs of women in front of themselves.

But for me, I let the men let the anger roar. The men I work with scream and swear. I have and will never stop that flow of anger that they have been forced to bottle up over the years. Whatever past torment is revealed, it is an entirely normal and rational response. And yet even some of the most experienced mental health professionals still do not understand this crucial point.



What we have done whilst trying to build ‘zero tolerance’ to violence environments, is lumped anger in with aggression. In this ‘safe space’ environment, if a teenage boy so much as utters a swear word or says that he ‘hates’ someone, he is perceived as unstable and in need of containing. We have been so obsessed about reducing violence on women, we have turned a blind eye to the violence on men. Violence on men is a convenient joke, reserved for YouTube videos of men getting hit in their testicles.

More of a corrosive issue even than this, is the role gender plays in stereotyping anger in young men. Anger in women and girls is seen as natural, and when they express anger (and aggression), society blindly accepts as normal — But I suppose ‘it’s that time of the month?’... Right? We even have a name for an obnoxious aggressive woman showing “bad emotions” — The Karen. We don’t have a male equivalent.



And so men are told by the mother from an early age to be nice to girls, polite to girls, respectful to girls, responsible for a girl's protection, and most of all, not show emotion. Know your place, in other words. Be the provider and protector to women.

I work with therapists, social workers, police officers, psychologists and doctors — who often hold misandrist views about anger in men — their attitude is that women expressing emotion is normal, but men expressing emotion is bad. So it's time we dismantled the stigma, started listening to men and asked men: "Why are you so angry? Who made you so angry?"

Perhaps if we listened to the words behind the silent screams and understood, we would grab a megaphone and scream from the rooftops too — and that shout could even be loud enough to ignite real change. This International Mens Day, think about all the times you may have tried to control a man by

restricting his emotions. Men are not here to be the providers and protectors of women, and to be the strong shoulder for women to cry on while they are hurting inside. Let men express their emotions and think nothing less of them when they do.

Why Do Inmates in Prison Despise Sex Offenders So Much?

It's probably not why you think at all — here's my unpopular opinion.



[Damian Delune](#)

Apr 19

<https://damiandelune.medium.com/why-do-inmates-in-prison-despise-sex-offenders-so-much-9747d853e30b>

4 min read

[Listen](#)



Photo by [Erika Fletcher](#) on [Unsplash](#)

One thing you'll see fairly consistently all over the internet and in movies and television about prison is how much inmates hate child molesters and sex offenders. Why seems pretty straightforward as well, but I have a hot take on it that's probably going to be fairly unpopular — but hear me out, as it really starts to make sense if you pay attention.

You need some back story to fully understand where I'm going with this. Day in and day out, I stand in line, waiting for my turn to get on the phone so I can talk to my wife. While I'm in line, I hear a lot of different conversations. I've recounted a few of these, but not all.

Over the last few days, NCAA Gymnastics has been on television while we've been in the day room. You can ask

[Demeter](#)

if you think I'm exaggerating. You would think I was standing in the middle of a fucking strip club while I'm trying to talk to her on the phone. Clapping, whistling, cat-calling and more has been going on during the day while we've tried to have a conversation. No, these men aren't impressed by the floor work these talented young women are doing.

They're standing as close as humanly possible to the screens trying to see if they can catch a glimpse of vulva, more cleavage, a hint more of ass crack. All the hollering and cat-calling is due to tight clothing and lithe bodies, not their talent.

And this isn't the first sign of misogyny I've witnessed on our block. There's a case manager who is particularly blessed in the butt department who, whenever she comes on the block, damn near every one of these guys breaks their neck trying to get a better spot to watch her walk up and down the steps. They don't just stare, they also cat-call her, 'suggesting' she wear tighter pants, or leggings, or even suggesting she wear skirts/dresses without panties.

They have zero shame.

Do these sound like men who are protective over women?

I've heard these same men laugh and joke about attending parties when they were on the outside, either doing a lot of drugs and/or providing drugs.

Teenagers and high school students in attendance. Lots of sex, drugs, and alcohol. Do you think they cared who they were having sex with? Many of them admitting they didn't care who they were fucking. It didn't matter, right? Of course not, as long as they didn't get caught.

Do these sound like men who are protective over children?

Yet, that's what you'll hear over and over again when it comes to child molesters (chomos) and sex offenders being ostracized and outcast in prison. They've preyed on the weak, the innocent, those who should be protected. And that's right, if that person is guilty of what they've been accused of doing for sure. No one is saying sex offenders, no matter what flavor they are, haven't done wrong.

What I'm saying is, don't get it twisted and think the people on the inside are magically becoming less misogynistic and all of a sudden protectors of the weak and innocent. That they mysteriously want to protect women and children in this particular situation, yet, seem to have no problem treating them like garbage when it benefits them.

What's the real deal?

There's a hierarchy everywhere in life, but nowhere more so than in prison. You've got to have those beneath you and who better than chomos? No matter how bad your charges, no matter how long you're in prison for, you'll always have the chomo beneath you to step on. They're the scum of the earth.

As a felon, you've been taught by society that you don't rank and it makes life difficult, so you've learned you must keep moving that shit downhill. When you're already at the bottom of the barrel, where do you move that? To the only people who rank lower than you, chomos.

I just find it hard to take anyone seriously who, in one breath, is screaming at their wife or girlfriend over the phone, calling them a whore and a stupid bitch,

then in the next, degrading another person who supposedly committed a sex crime, saying they're doing so because it was against a vulnerable woman.

If you can't treat your own wife with the respect and dignity she deserves, how can you really stand there and defend a woman you don't even know? You can't, it's just performative.

Most men in prison who beat down chomos, who harass sex offenders, who accuse other inmates of being sex offenders when they aren't, are all doing so from a place of boredom, following the leader, and fitting themselves into a society who refuses to do the same for them. It's sad, honestly.

damiandelune.medium.com

Damian Delune is currently incarcerated. His wife, [Demeter](#) publishes his work. No, he doesn't have access to the internet or computers within the prison. If you have any questions, would like to interview Damian, or anything else, feel free to contact at damiandelune@gmail.com and the message will be passed on to him ASAP. If you would like to help keep him in contact with those he loves, you can do so [here](#) or [here](#).

Systems of Oppression are Deadlier than We Think

Racism, Mental Health & Diabetes:



[Leah Whitcomb](#)

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Image courtesy of [Bestbe Models](#)

About two months ago, I gave blood for the first time in years. Since it had been so long since my last donation, naturally, I was anxious. *Would my blood be okay? What if I had a disease I didn't know about?* My mind thumbed through the worst scenarios, and my heart was racing. When it was time to take my blood pressure, it was high. *Why was it*

high? Normally, when my blood pressure was checked, it is normal. I've never had high blood pressure before.

But I do have anxiety, and like [I wrote in my last story](#), anxiety has physical effects which for me include hives or sweating. It's also known to have physiological affects like hypertension, cardiovascular problems, and metabolic issues.

Even though mental illness affects all types of people in the United States, it disproportionately affects Black Americans. [Black Americans are 20 percent more likely to experience mental illness than the general population](#). Common mental health disorders include major depressive disorder, generalized anxiety disorder, post traumatic stress disorder (PTSD) and suicide. [One of the major causes of these mental health disorders in Black people is racism](#).

Racism manifests itself in different ways. In my own life, racism appears as white people wanting to pet me and touch my hair; say the N word around me; follow me around in stores; compare my personality or features to other Black people; argue with me that the things I've experienced aren't real and that I'm overreacting; or blame me first in a predominantly white group whenever something goes wrong. Dealing with these microaggressions in my daily life, it's easy to see where my anxiety comes from.

Then when you add social media, it exacerbates the racism. Something about anonymity brings out the worst in people. I was once called a "white genocider" because I tweeted about slavery and the genocide of Native Americans in the United States — something historically accurate but it still hurt to have 20 something people in your notifications telling you that you hate white people because you brought up the violence that white colonizers inflicted upon your ancestors on this land.

So, when I see op-eds blame diabetes and hypertension on Black people's eating habits, I prefer to look at it from a social and cultural perspective. It's not eating habits that cause diabetes, hypertension and heart problems; it's racism.

According to [a study published in JAMA](#), patients with severe mental illnesses, such as schizophrenia, bipolar disorder, and depression lose 25 or more years of their life expectancy due primarily to cardiovascular disease. Cardiovascular disease (CVD), includes coronary heart disease (CHD), stroke, and peripheral vascular disease. When you pair this research with the fact that Black people are most likely to experience severe mental illness due to racism, it's not a stretch to say that racism is shortening our lives. A recent example of this is the death of [Erica Gardner](#) — a young political activist who joined the Black Lives Matter movement in 2014 after her father Eric Gardner was murdered during the NYPD's attempt to arrest him for allegedly selling cigarettes. She had an enlarged heart, suffered two heart attacks, and died December 30, 2017 at the age of 27.

It wasn't known whether Gardner suffered from mental illness, but I can't imagine the stress of seeing her father murdered in a viral video, advocating for her father and those like him against a police institution in a police state, and dealing with the racist backlash from people who probably sent non-stop death and rape threats. The stress of those things could definitely impact mental health and could've been the cause of her enlarged heart, eventual heart attacks, and death.

In addition to mental illness affecting CVD, [a study published in BMC Psychiatry](#) expanded to show how mental illness also affects metabolism. Their study concluded that diabetes is one of the more common illnesses in those with severe mental illness with hypertension being a little less common. While I don't want to absolve those with type 2 diabetes and say that over-consumption of unhealthy food is not the cause of it, I know that other factors are at play. I lived in the South and know that both white and Black people indulge in fatty foods regularly, but Black folks are more likely to have diabetes, hypertension and heart problems. My argument is that we are more likely to suffer from these diseases due to racism compromising our health.

We know that Black people are most likely to experience mental illness. Racism is the number one reason for that. Severe mental illness causes other health issues such as cardiovascular disease and diabetes which can cause complications and kill us. With this information, it is not a stretch to say that racism is a threat to public safety. We die not just from blatant

racism such as the KKK lynching us or police officers shooting us, but also from implicit racism as well such as [doctors not treating our pain because they think we're overreacting](#) or [Black mothers dying maternally at a rate three times higher than white mothers](#) and from microaggressions such as white people saying “nigga” in front of our face. Racism and microaggressions constantly assault our mental health and compromise our physical health. Whether swiftly or slowly racism kills us and those who wield it against us are terrorists and murderers.

I can't help but to expand this though. I bet people who experience homophobia, fatphobia, ableism, islamophobia, Antisemitism, xenophobia, transphobia, queerphobia, sexism or are victims of a host of other institutional systems also experience severe mental illness and have their health compromised as a result. I hope that with this research we can all work to resolve our implicit biases and be more compassionate towards others — treating them as whole individuals, lessening the burden of their oppression, and lengthening their lives.

546

[Mental Health](#)

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[Race](#)

[Health](#)

546 claps



WRITTEN BY

[**Leah Whitcomb**](#)

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Black Southern woman writer first and a bunch of other things second.

Present Progress for Equitably Supporting Disabled Women?

Here is the link for the CEDAW Beijing Platform For Actions in 2020.

<https://sdg.iisd.org/sdgs/>

And on that page, you will find Goal #5 which is about Gender Equality. Here is the link for that. Then, you can grab some thoughts about putting 'Gender Equity before Gender Equality'.

<https://sdg.iisd.org/sdgs/goal-5-gender-equality/>

PWW - CEDAW statements and submissions

NGO alternative interim report - Disabled Women's Forum (2020)

Cities for CEDAW Presentation to Auckland City Council (2015)

NGO interim report to New Zealand Government CEDAW committee (2014)

NGO alternative report on the Status of Women to UN CEDAW monitoring Committee (2006)

CEDAW review - taking further action (2007)

Examples of engagement with the Human Rights Commission's mediation service

This page gives examples where complaints about unsatisfactory treatment had not been satisfactorily resolved by the organisation complained about and the HRC Commission led mediation which led to a satisfactory resolution.

page 184 extracted from: Making Disability Rights Real Whakatūturū Ngā Tika Hauātanga

Third report of the Independent Monitoring Mechanism of the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities
Aotearoa | New Zealand 2014–2019

https://www.hrc.co.nz/files/3415/9348/7609/Making_Disability_Rights_Real_2014-2019_compressed.pdf

Engagement with the mediation service offered by the HRC is voluntary, but agreed resolutions can extend to systemic improvements as illustrated in the following examples.

- Providers of services and public places improved the accessibility and safety of sites, including those of significant national importance.
- An accommodation provider recognised the role of disability assist dogs and sought to increase awareness throughout the industry.
- An electricity company changed its policy for customers with a medical dependency on an uninterrupted electricity supply.
- A school committed to greater teacher support for students with autism spectrum disorder.
- A health-related organisation agreed to change its recruitment policy to include information about how to avoid unlawful discrimination.
- A major event venue reconsidered access for users of mobility scooters.
- A major government agency reviewed its policy and level of funding for health treatment as a result of a disability discrimination complaint.
- A car parking company sought an independent review of an accessible parking policy and practices.
- An employer amended its recruitment policy on the appropriateness of seeking medical certificates.
- An early childcare facility reviewed its policy to improve the inclusion of disabled children.
- A ticketing agency reviewed its accessibility criteria.
- A media entertainment company agreed to give its contact centre staff training on disability awareness to enable them to respond to disabled customers in an appropriately sensitive manner.
- A liquor store will make changes to processes and train staff on the responsible sale of alcohol to assist with deciding whether a customer is intoxicated (including considering the possibility that some disabilities may affect customers' speech, balance and appearance).

NCW 2020 Mid Term Report to CEDAW

https://d3n8a8pro7vhmx.cloudfront.net/ncwnz/pages/1071/attachments/original/1604283457/mid_term_report_all_responses_20_Final.pdf?1604283457

Where New Zealand Once Led In Gender Equality, We're Now Ranked 6th In The World

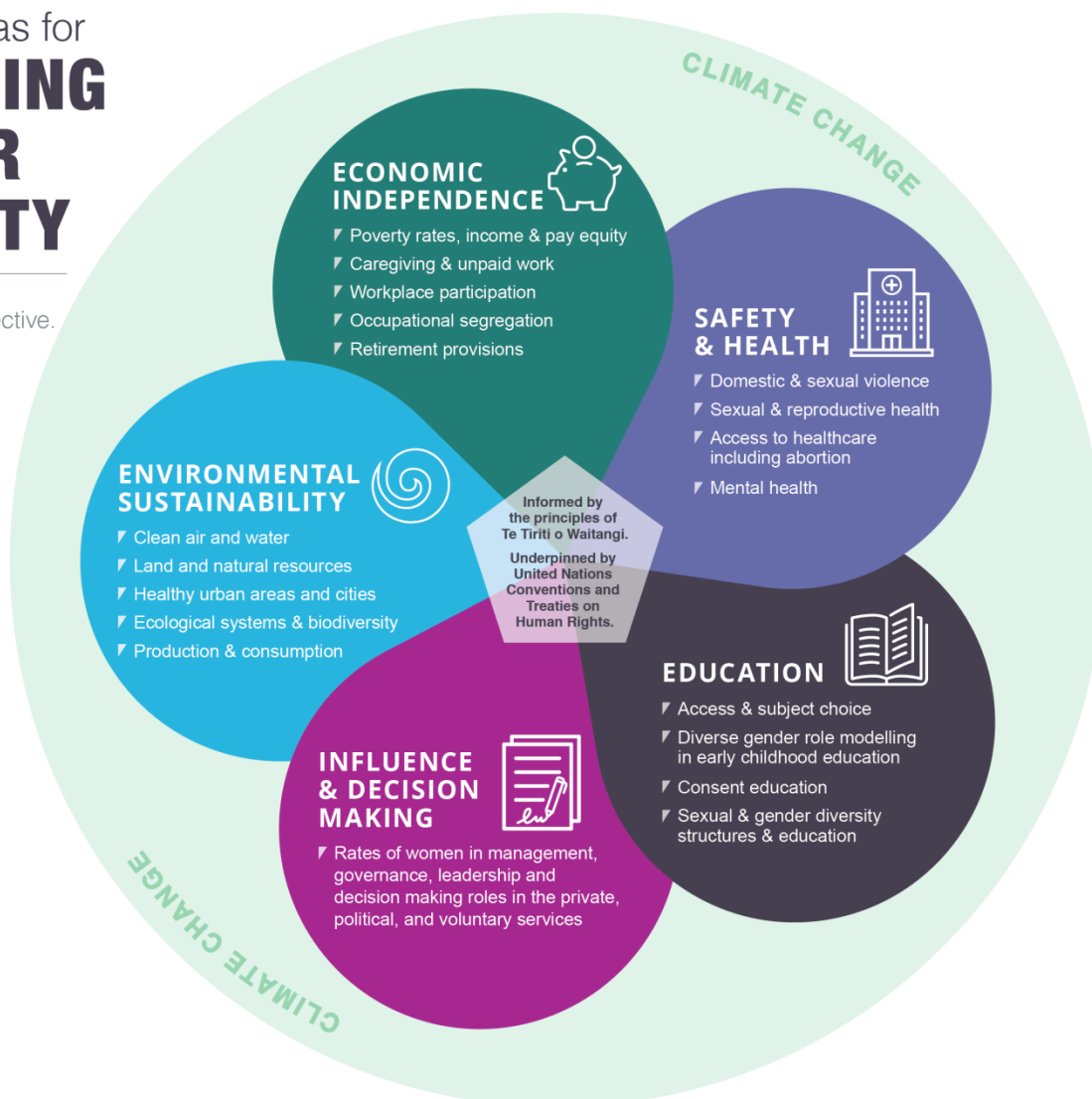
<https://www.ncwnz.org.nz/>

<https://genderequal.nz/ga-survey/>

<https://genderequal.nz/datastories/>

Five key areas for **ACHIEVING GENDER EQUALITY**

Approached from an
intersectional perspective.



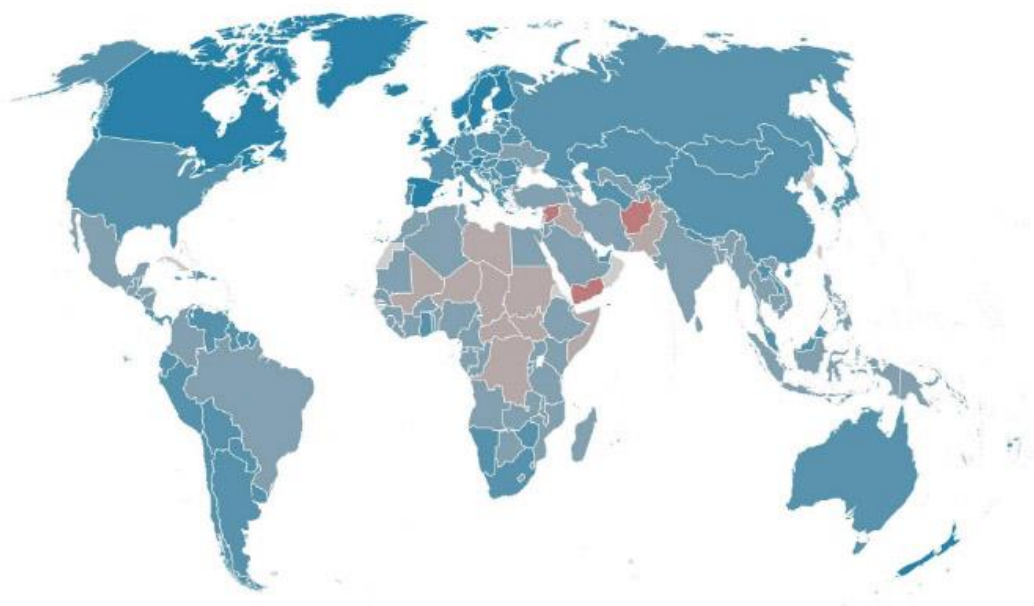
<http://www.dpa.org.nz/resources/sector-resources/auckland-pre-election-forum>

Some parties seem to have very little interest in women's rights, surprisingly little.

[World] Women, Peace, and Security Index

<https://giwps.georgetown.edu/the-index/>

This WPSI is based on total population average well-being.



The Women, Peace, and Security Index analysis is of average well being. It doesn't accurately represent the position of marginalised communities within that country.

Medical research used to often ignore women patients, when testing possible new drugs. This simplified the design of drug trials and reduced the costs of the drug trials. It was assumed that women's responses to drugs would be identical to men's, unless obvious sex differences were present. Over time, problems for women patients showed up, with sometimes serious consequences. Medical trials almost always carefully include women and other minority groups in our society.

PERSPECTIVES|PROFILE| [VOLUME 396, ISSUE 10261](#), P1480, NOVEMBER 07, 2020

Making Disability Rights Real

<http://www.dpa.org.nz/making-disability-rights-real>

This report identifies the progress New Zealand is making to implement the United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities from July 2012 - December 2013. It is the second report from the Independent Monitoring Mechanism (IMM).

The report was launched by the Human Rights Commission and compiled by the Convention Coalition, the Human Rights Commission and the Ombudsman. (They are the three partners in the IMM on the Disability Convention.)

Some of the Work That is Being Done in NZ

Organisations Working To Counter Inequality:

Pacific Women's Watch	https://www.pacificwomenswatch.org.nz/
Disabled People's Assembly	http://www.dpa.org.nz/
National Council of Women	https://www.ncwnz.org.nz/
CCS NZ	https://www.ccsdisabilityaction.org.nz/

PWW Conference Reports and Submissions

<https://www.pacificwomenswatch.org.nz/resources>

Conclusion: It takes a huge amount of work, over an extended period of time, to gain policy changes through the political system.

Recognising and Supporting Intersectionality

That NCWNZ actively supports and advocates for an intersectional approach to gender equality.

https://d3n8a8pro7vhmx.cloudfront.net/ncwnz/mailings/1082/attachments/original/Final_remits_2020_-_combined.pdf

Disability Leadership, Representation and Active Involvement discussion paper

<http://www.dpa.org.nz/paul-gibsons-questionnaire>

This is a paper for discussion prepared by Paul Gibson, Disability Rights Commissioner in June 2015. Feedback is sought for guidelines on these matters.

DPA Submissions and Reports

Use of Ableist Words and Phrases

Rethinking language The rising debate around the use of ableist words and phrases

[Able = NOT OTHER]

Melanie Earley05:00, Jun 13 2021

<https://www.stuff.co.nz/national/125189481/rethinking-language-the-rising-debate-around-the-use-of-ableist-words-and-phrases>

Dr Huhana Hickey is organising a protest outside parliament to lobby for more disabled voices in government.

The words ‘crazy’, ‘mental’ and ‘lazy’ may be a standard part of many of our vocabularies, but is it possible the use of certain words and phrases could be causing harm to millions of people? Melanie Earley reports.

In recent years, especially [on social media](#), there has been some debate about “ableist” language, and what words should be avoided in order to not demean people with disabilities or mental health issues.

Jonny Wilkinson, CEO of Tiaho Trust, a disability service in Northland, said the way he saw it was ableist words were used to “taunt” people with disabilities.

[The Oxford English Dictionary](#) described ableism as discrimination in favour of able-bodied people, with the example “we were fed up with the ableism of the women's movement”.

“We have the more obvious language like the word ‘retard’ – but there are so many other words that are ingrained into our language, we don’t even realise we’re saying them,” Wilkinson said.



JONNY WILKINSON/SUPPLIED

Jonny Wilkinson, CEO of Tiaho Trust said ableist language “taunted” people with disabilities.

An example of this was the word “lame”, Wilkinson said, which people used to describe something boring, when originally it meant unable to move.

“Another example would be describing someone as ‘suffering’ from a condition. Once when I went into a shop somebody asked me what I suffered from, but I don’t suffer.

In some cases, however, people with disabilities chose to “claim back the language”, Wilkinson said, including people with disabilities referring to themselves as ‘crips’.

Professor of Linguistics at the University of Auckland, Robert Greenberg, who is blind, said phrases, such as “the blind leading the blind”, may be offensive to some people, but he personally didn’t mind it.



ABIGAIL DOUGHERTY/STUFF

Professor Robert Greenberg is the dean of arts and linguistics at the University of Auckland.

“Personally, phrases involving the word blind don’t offend me,” Greenberg said, “but there may be other people who are blind out there who are offended by it.”

Recently, comedian Michele A'Court posted [an apology to Twitter](#), after a joke she made about anti-vaxxers believing vaccines cause autism on the television show *7 Days* was criticised by a number of people online.

“A number of people have been kind enough to be in touch with me to explain any joke referencing autistic people is harmful, it reinforces negative views, and that many people have been hurt by what I said,” A'Court wrote.

The apology was met with a mixed response online – some accepted her apology and were happy to move on, while others said the joke had been in “poor taste” and they were “disappointed” with the comedian, while others believed an apology wasn’t necessary at all.

“Anything said on a comedy show should be taken as comedy,” one commenter said, “the purpose of comedy is to get a laugh”.

“I get it was satire, but it clearly has no place in 2021,” another commenter chimed in.



ROBERT KITCHIN/STUFF

Disability advocate Dr Huhana Hickey said everyday language could be incredibly harmful to people with disabilities.

[Dr Huhana Hickey](#), a disability advocate, said language could hold immense power over people, and words could hurt.

“Simple, everyday ableist language can hurt others, and while there’s more of an awareness now, people with disabilities are still invisible in society,” Hickey said.

[The Oxford English Dictionary](#) described ableism as discrimination in favour of able-bodied people, with the example “we were fed up with the ableism of the women's movement”.

melanie.earley@stuff.co.nz

Ableist language was the “language of the ignorant”, Hickey said, and it made her and many others feel as though they weren’t valued.

“Society uses language they don’t think about, and the labels they have placed on us keep us down.

“They say sticks and stone can break your bones, but many a person has committed suicide over the use of words and language.”

Inclusive communities

<http://www.dpa.org.nz/inclusive-communities->

Inclusive Communities are documents which provide guidelines about disability for territorial authorities and district health boards in Aotearoa New Zealand.

Racism, Mental Health & Diabetes: Why Systems of Oppression are Deadlier than We Think



[Leah Whitcomb](#)

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Image courtesy of [Bestbe Models](#)

About two months ago, I gave blood for the first time in years. Since it had been so long since my last donation, naturally, I was anxious. *Would my blood be okay? What if I had a disease I didn't know about?* My mind thumbed through the worst scenarios, and my heart was racing. When it was time to take my blood pressure, it was high. *Why was it high?* Normally, when my blood pressure was checked, it is normal. I've never had high blood pressure before.

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Racism as a Determinant of Health: A Systematic Review and Meta-Analysis

<https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC4580597/>

Poverty, Racism, and the Public Health Crisis in America

Racism and discrimination in health care: Providers and patients

<https://www.health.harvard.edu/blog/racism-discrimination-health-care-providers-patients-2017011611015>

Call to Action: Structural Racism as a Fundamental Driver of Health Disparities: A Presidential Advisory From the American Heart Association

<https://www.ahajournals.org/doi/10.1161/CIR.0000000000000936>

Institutional racism in Australian healthcare: a plea for decency

Barbara R Henry, Shane Houston and Gavin H Mooney

Med J Aust 2004; 180 (10): 517-520. || doi: 10.5694/j.1326-5377.2004.tb06056.x

Published online: 17 May 2004

<https://www.mja.com.au/journal/2004/180/10/institutional-racism-australian-healthcare-plea-decency>

Inequality and Māori by Evan Te Ahu Poata-Smith

From Inequality - A NZ Crisis Chapter 10 edited by Max Rushbrooke BWBooks

Inequality between Māori and non-Māori has been an enduring feature of New Zealand society. But in recent decades, it has coincided with another unwelcome development: the growth of income gaps within Māori communities.

These inequalities stem from the general social and economic position of Māori in New Zealand society, but also from the policies pursued by both Labour and National governments from 1984–99 and largely retained, although modified and softened, by Labour-led governments from 1999–2008. Despite the overwhelming evidence that these policies substantially increased inequality, as detailed in this chapter, they have been revived and extended by National-led governments since 2008.

This raises controversial questions about the current direction of Māori economic and social development. Who is currently benefiting, and who is not? To what extent do current ideas about Māori development empower some groups of Māori, while disenfranchising or marginalising others?

The end of the golden weather

The position of Māori in New Zealand society springs first of all from two distinct, although interlocking, processes: the alienation of land and resources through European colonisation; and the later Māori labour migration, required to provide a workforce for an emerging capitalist society.¹

Increasingly dispossessed of their economic base over the century that followed the signing of the Treaty of Waitangi, Māori were forced to rely increasingly on wage labour to meet their basic needs. As the New Zealand economy expanded after the Second World War, industry became centralised in the larger cities, especially the greater region of Auckland. Rural unemployment was high, and Māori migrated in large numbers to the urban centres. The Māori population, meantime, was growing fast – much faster than the economic base (land and resources) remaining in Māori ownership could sustain. An increasing Māori population and its redistribution to urban areas, where Māori were likely to encounter limited employment opportunities, poor housing and overcrowding, were matters for discussion even by conservative academics concerned about the threat to New Zealand's social cohesion.²

The vast majority of Māori families were incorporated into the working class and into the lower levels of segmented labour markets; they were concentrated in blue-collar occupations such as in the freezing works, on the waterside, in construction and transport, and as coalminers and railway workers. These occupations often had long hours, low pay, and difficult and unpleasant working conditions. The limited opportunities for economic advancement were reinforced by discrimination in hiring and promotion practices. In his research in the 1950s, James Ritchie confirmed what many Māori already knew: that such discrimination was 'endemic in the social context of both town and country'.³ In the 1960s, a visiting American Fulbright scholar, David Ausubel, highlighted the emergence of 'an urban Māori proletariat' as well as the existence of widespread anti-Māori prejudice and flagrant forms of discrimination.⁴

The relative economic prosperity of the post-Second World War period may have encouraged an impression of social tranquillity and harmony, but the reality was that the prosperity generated by the long boom did not accrue to everyone equally.⁵ Indeed, the assimilative ideology of ‘one nation, one people’ that dominated official state policy with respect to Māori, and the prevailing view at the time that New Zealand possessed the most harmonious ‘race relations’ in the world, concealed the harsh social and economic reality for the majority of Māori migrants to urban areas. Māori found themselves crammed into inadequate housing and concentrated in specific neighbourhoods and in particular regions of cities. In this context, economist Bill Sutch warned of the development of ‘a miniature Harlem’ in Auckland and to a lesser extent in Wellington.⁶

In 1961, J.K. Hunn’s landmark report on the Department of Māori Affairs⁷ demonstrated the systemic failure of the assimilation policies that had governed ‘indigenous affairs’ in New Zealand since the nineteenth century.⁸

The Hunn Report found that even in a time of economic expansion and growing labour shortages, Māori did not necessarily share the benefits: ‘It is a paradox that, while New Zealand’s industrial development is handicapped by a shortage of manpower, there are pockets of under-employment among able-bodied Maoris and the unemployment rate for Maoris is higher than for Europeans.’⁹

During the ‘long boom’ (as this period of prosperity was known), Māori social and economic inequalities were viewed largely as a technical and temporary problem that would be resolved once Māori families were fully integrated into the labour force of an expanding capitalist economy. After all, with economic growth occurring in advanced capitalist countries at such a scale that output would double every sixteen years, each generation could expect to be roughly twice as well-off as its parents and four times as well-off as its grandparents.¹⁰

But the belief that the benefits of a booming economy would trickle down to Māori families – thus eliminating the inequalities that existed between Māori and Pākehā – was shattered as the New Zealand economy entered a prolonged period of economic and political crises by the early 1970s. A country that prided itself on good ‘race relations’ and an absence of class inequality was confronted by unavoidable evidence of Māori economic, cultural and social deprivation. A formidable Māori protest movement arose as part of a generalised upsurge in struggle on a global scale. This movement was characterised by unprecedented levels of class struggle, and the emergence of a wide range of social movements that challenged the complacency of mid-twentieth century New Zealand.¹¹

The dramatic upsurge in Māori protest and discontent, intensified by the prolonged economic stagnation and rising unemployment from 1974 onwards, forced successive governments to respond to the evidence that many Māori occupied a relatively impoverished and peripheral place in New Zealand society. Numerous studies confirmed that Māori continued to experience disproportionately poor educational outcomes, high levels of unemployment, low income levels, ill-health and hence lower life expectancy, higher rates of imprisonment, low rates of home ownership and high rates of state dependency.¹² The existence of such dramatic inequalities, between Māori and Pākehā New Zealanders in particular, combined with the systemic failure of the state to ameliorate or transcend these inequalities, made Māori challenges to the legitimacy of the state all the more potent and forceful.

The state also faced an economic crisis that severely limited its ability to defuse this growing crisis of political legitimacy. Declining profitability, inadequate levels of investment, minimal productivity growth, economic stagnation, the historically low terms of trade, and high levels of public and private debt were classic symptoms of an economic crisis.¹³ This prolonged crisis profoundly shaped the basic direction and orientation of New Zealand politics from 1974.

Enduring inequalities

If Māori entered the 1980s far behind non-Māori communities in terms of income, wealth and access to basic services, they were to fall even further behind in following decades. This was in large part because successive governments since 1984 implemented a neoliberal political agenda. Indeed, the period 1984–99 represents a major turning point in New Zealand politics, as the Fourth Labour Government, from 1984–90, embarked on a systematic programme of restructuring, an approach continued under National governments from 1990–99. This restructuring brought increasing hardship and poverty for many New Zealanders. People across the country faced falling real incomes, inter-generational unemployment, cuts to benefit levels, and deteriorating employment conditions and job security.¹⁴ The restructuring had a disproportionate and sustained impact on working-class Māori families. Ranking New Zealand households¹⁵ from the poorest 20 per cent (quintile 1) to the richest 20 per cent (quintile 5) consistently shows households with a Māori adult as disproportionately represented amongst those in the first three quintiles, and significantly under-represented amongst those on high incomes. This is significant because, from the collapse of the long boom in 1974, and up to the year 2001, the real incomes of the bottom 60 per cent of New Zealanders declined, while the wealthiest 20 per cent of the population increased their incomes substantially.¹⁶ As a result, the growing levels of income inequality during the 1980s and 1990s adversely affected Māori more than Pākehā.

The removal of industry subsidies and import tariffs also hit hardest those blue-collar occupational industries in which Māori and Pacific peoples were concentrated. These industries shed labour in order to compete more profitably on the world market. This trend was compounded by the restructuring of the New Zealand economy since the mid-1970s, which had seen the importance of the financial (or banking) sector of the economy grow dramatically relative to the industrial and commercial sectors. This had dramatic implications for the employment prospects of working-class Māori, given the relatively youthful nature of the Māori labour force together with its lower educational attainment and its higher concentration in blue-collar industries and occupations.

Māori unemployment also increased dramatically. From 1988, the Māori unemployment rate rose sharply, from 13.5 per cent in March 1988 to a high of 27.3 per cent by March 1992. By 1998, a report commissioned by Te Puni Kōkiri noted that, despite improvements for Māori in some areas, overall the gaps had either remained the same or widened.¹⁷

Closing the gaps?

Between 1999 and 2008, Labour-led coalition governments made a fundamental commitment to reducing the gaps between rich and poor, and to increasing social cohesion. In his budget speech in 2000, the Minister of Finance, Michael Cullen, announced a series of initiatives to close the ‘divisive and debilitating gaps that have opened up throughout New Zealand Society’.¹⁸ The government, Cullen argued, was committed to closing the ‘most urgent and visible gaps’ that existed between Māori and Pacific peoples and other New Zealanders.¹⁹ However, initiatives designed specifically for Māori generated ongoing political controversy, amidst claims that Māori were receiving privileged treatment through special access to resources and a range of targeted programmes.²⁰ The political backlash was such that the ‘closing the gaps’ catch-phrase was abandoned only a year into the Labour–Alliance coalition’s term. The policies initially put in place around the ‘closing the gaps’

strategy were subsequently realigned under the 'reducing inequalities' policy framework that encompassed a range of social and economic initiatives.²¹

Then, in the 2004 budget, the Labour-led government unveiled Working for Families, a package ostensibly designed to help low-income families by providing financial support and overcoming barriers to finding paid work. This flagship welfare initiative represented a significant concession after years in which government systematically eroded workers' rights, dismantled support for low-income families, and neglected child and family poverty. But it is important to recognise that these small but significant concessions were shaped by the political and economic character of the period. From 1984–99, the costs of the welfare state were increasingly incompatible with the need to restore levels of profitability in the economy, which required curbing state expenditure and the costs associated with state intervention in the market place. In contrast, the Fifth Labour Government and its coalition partners were aided by the cyclical economic upswing from 1999–2007, which reduced pressure on the government to continue the programme of neoliberal restructuring.²²

In the context of this cyclical economic recovery, income inequality declined slightly in the period 2001–7, reflecting a reduction in unemployment and the impact of Working for Families.²³ Nevertheless, many New Zealand families (including a disproportionate number of Māori families) were not in a position to take advantage of these policy concessions. Because the reforms only targeted those who were actively participating in the labour market, they largely excluded families reliant on income support, such as those whose primary focus was caring for children, the sick or the elderly, or those who were themselves living with illnesses and disabilities. Statistics from the Ministry of Social Development for April 2006 revealed that 93,423 Māori children and 137,857 non-Māori children were excluded from the benefits of the Working for Families initiative on that basis. This represented 45.9 per cent of all Māori children, 29.6 per cent of Pacific children and 12.3 per cent of Pākehā children.²⁴

In addition, beneficiaries gained very little from Working for Families. For many, the increases in family support in 2005 were largely offset by losses in core benefits and special benefits that saved the government around \$237 million.²⁵ Since poverty has become entrenched amongst sole-parent and benefit-dependent Māori and Pacific families, and because a disproportionate number of the poorest children are Māori, this policy did little to ameliorate some long-established inequalities.

Not surprisingly then, the Ministry of Social Development's *Social Report 2006* showed that Māori had fallen further behind Pākehā on a range of key measures, despite the 'closing the gaps' policies.²⁶ While the report showed that Māori had improved in absolute terms on all measures for which data were available, the relative gaps between Māori and Pākehā had widened in many cases. The only measure going back to 1986 that showed a very marginal closing of the gap was unemployment; according to the report, Māori unemployment was 3.3 times the Pākehā rate, compared to 3.4 times the rate in 1986.

Despite a number of important concessions and an apparent softening of the hardline approach to economic management, overall economic policy was still driven by a tight monetary policy aimed at maintaining 0–3 per cent inflation, and a 'medium-term' objective to maintain substantial budget surpluses. Because the Labour-led governments of 1999–2008 remained firmly entrenched in a vision of the liberating power of the market place and globalisation, their concessions never fully compensated for the repressive anti-working-class policies of the post-1984 governments.

Although the cyclical recovery ended, and was replaced by the most severe global financial crisis and economic slowdown since the Great Depression, National-led governments from 2008 have remained fixated on fiscal

austerity, regardless of the social cost. The twin objectives of returning to budget surpluses by 2014–15, and bringing government debt down to 20 per cent of GDP by 2020,²⁷ are being funded by ‘restraining the growth in core Crown expenses’. As Finance Minister Bill English has noted: ‘The Government’s return to surplus will require continuing control of the long-term drivers of costs in areas such as welfare, health, education and law and order.’²⁸ This builds on the fiscal austerity measures in Budget 2011, including cuts to KiwiSaver, Working for Families, student loans and the core public service.²⁹

This commitment to continued neoliberal policy reform and fiscal austerity will exacerbate the impact of the global recession and entrench levels of inequality in New Zealand society. It is already widely acknowledged that these policies, both internationally and in New Zealand, have substantially increased inequality.³⁰ In 2010–11, inequality increased significantly, as incomes rose in the top third of the population and fell for everyone else.³¹ Once again, Māori will be disproportionately affected: in fact, Māori unemployment rates have risen significantly. The unemployment rate for Māori was 13.3 per cent in the year to March 2012 – up from 7.9 per cent just five years earlier.³² On a different measure, 17.6 per cent of Māori males and 27.5 per cent of Māori females were classified as not being in employment, education or training, compared with 11.5 per cent of all males and 14.6 per cent of all females in this age group.³³

Emerging inequalities

One of the features of recent decades has been the growth of inequality and social polarisation within Māori communities. While Māori have been disproportionately represented in the bottom 60 per cent of households, household economic surveys from 1982 to 1996 show that Māori have also been consistently represented in the top 40 per cent.³⁴ The growing social inequalities in New Zealand society have not affected all Māori equally: a minority have directly benefited from the fiscal agenda that was implemented from 1984 onwards.

The surveys reveal that households with Māori adults were more evenly spread across income groups in the 1980s than in later years.³⁵ From the late 1980s to 1994, the proportion of households with Māori adults in the lowest fifth rose to 37 per cent (58,500 households). At the other end of the distribution, the proportion of households with a Māori adult in the top fifth dropped from 13 per cent in 1988 to 8 per cent in 1992, then rose to a high of 16 per cent in 1996, returning to 13 per cent in 1998.³⁶ The fact that a small proportion of Māori households is located in the top fifth of all households is significant. While the vast majority of households have lost disposable income over time, the households in the top fifth have improved their absolute and relative position significantly.³⁷

Wealth is yet more unevenly distributed than income.³⁸ The 2003–4 Survey of Family, Income and Employment shows a very skewed distribution of wealth, measured as ‘net worth’: those in the top tenth hold 50 per cent of the total wealth.³⁹ [Table 10.1](#) shows the wealth distribution between major ethnic groups. In a perfectly symmetrical distribution, the mean – the average wealth per person – would be the same as the median, measured as the amount of wealth held by the middle person in the distribution. When the mean is much greater than the median, it shows there are abnormally large numbers of wealthy people ‘pulling up’ the mean, and that wealth is unequally distributed. As the table clearly indicates, the distribution of wealth for Europeans is significantly unequal (the mean is twice the median) while the distribution for Māori is even more unequal.

	Population %	Total Net Worth %	Mean \$	Median \$	Mean/Median Ratio
European	83	92.7	178,400	86,900	2.1

Māori	10.4	4.3	65,800	18,000	3.6
Pacific peoples	4.9	1.3	41,400	6,700	6.2
Asian	6.4	3.8	95,600	21,000	4.6
Other	1.9	1.2	100,200	19,000	5.3

Table 10.1: Wealth distribution between major ethnic groups. *Note:* The classification of ethnic groups is based on total responses to the question on ethnicity in the Survey of Family, Income and Employment (SoFIE) conducted in 2003/04; this is the reason the figures exceed 100 per cent. *Source:* Jit Cheung, *Wealth Disparities in New Zealand*, Statistics New Zealand, Wellington, 2007, p.10.

In short, both income and wealth have accrued unevenly among Māori. This raises a central question: how should we evaluate ‘Māori development’? It also raises a further question: who is currently benefiting and who is not? This process has not taken place on a level playing field. In recent years, the field has been sharply tilted in favour of those representing tribal corporations and Māori business interests. They have been able to exert a disproportionate influence over the formation of the Treaty of Waitangi settlement framework – and the scope of Māori development. Since this group has interests in the profitability of tribal commercial ventures or private Māori-owned businesses (or both), its members benefit from a general policy package that helps them achieve those profits: low rates of corporate tax, minimal state intervention in the market place, reductions in compliance costs and so forth.

This has significant implications for understanding Māori development. Those Māori representing tribal corporations and commercial interests benefited from the significant reduction in corporate tax rates. Yet these tax cuts were funded through large cuts in welfare expenditure and the commercialisation of health, housing and education – all of which have impacted severely on Māori households located in the bottom 60 per cent of income earners (whose real income declined significantly through much of the restructuring period). So, while those Māori representing tribal corporations and commercial interests have directly benefited from the economic policies of successive governments, the vast majority of Māori families have borne the brunt of the economic restructuring.

Indeed, one of the critical developments in New Zealand politics since 1984 has been the way the state has relied on representatives of iwi to sell the idea of Māori capitalist development. Māori businesses and commercial interests have been cultivated by successive governments in an attempt to set the parameters of an acceptable strategy for Māori development, while marginalising more far-reaching alternatives. Even though this locks Māori self-determination into a free-market, capitalist economic framework, the strategy has been effective because it appeals to those Māori business interests whose profitability has been enhanced by the restructurings of the 1980s and 1990s.

During this period representatives of commercially restructured iwi authorities were able to position themselves as the principal Māori authorities, and thus negotiate the Treaty of Waitangi settlement framework and the agenda for Māori economic development.⁴⁰ In the absence of alternative representative structures, and with the move to the direct negotiation of Treaty claims in the 1990s, iwi authorities were left in a privileged position to negotiate directly with the government over particular claims, and to link purely commercial deals to the settlement of those claims under the Treaty of Waitangi.

Despite this, Māori development has always been contested. The adoption of neoliberal strategies for managing iwi assets and resources has never been particularly popular amongst Māori communities at the flax roots. In fact there have been profound levels of discontent, for instance, with the use of corporate models for the management and distribution of Treaty settlement assets. There are concerns about the commercialisation of Māori culture, the insecurity of tribal assets for future generations, and governance and internal tribal democracy.⁴¹

In the last decade, debates about Māori economic and social development have occurred amidst a political backlash against programmes targeting Māori communities and the Treaty of Waitangi settlement process. Despite unequivocal evidence that growing levels of inequality have more adversely affected Māori than Pākehā, some sections of the public believe that Māori are, in fact, a privileged minority, benefiting from special access to resources and targeted initiatives. Since 2004 some prominent politicians have generated popularist support for the idea that indigenous claims relating to partnership and sovereignty are undermining harmonious ‘race relations’. They have called for a comprehensive review of programmes that target Māori, and an examination of legislative references to the principles of the Treaty of Waitangi, both of which are said to undermine the principle of ‘one law for all’.⁴²

It is important to make a number of points. First, iwi leaders have long been the target of racist double standards and cultural marginalisation. In many situations, this has intensified in the context of the Treaty settlement process, which some have pejoratively referred to as the indigenous ‘grievance industry’. This trivialises Māori experiences in a way that seeks to place the onus for Māori material deprivation on iwi, hapū and urban Māori communities. In this narrative, the violent history of colonisation, the systematic dispossession of Māori land and resources, racism, and the assumption of European cultural supremacy miraculously disappear. Yet all have been powerful forces in shaping the lives of many Māori.

Secondly, while it is true that the Māori commercial asset base grew significantly from the mid-1980s,⁴³ the wealth of iwi corporates is often overstated. In reality, iwi have limited capacity to deal with significant inter-generational inequality. Even if all iwi beneficiaries were the recipients of an equal share of tribal wealth, the impact on income inequality as a whole would be marginal. The scale of inequality in New Zealand is such that it would take a substantial redistribution of society’s resources (most of which are tied up in private ownership) to make a difference. For this is a country in which the top 10 per cent of the population owns over half (51.8 per cent) of total net worth, and the bottom 50 per cent collectively owns a mere 5.2 per cent: changing this distribution would require a transformation of society itself.

Finally, ‘scapegoating’ has a long history in New Zealand politics. It diverts attention from the impact of the 1980s and 1990s restructuring, which widened and entrenched inequality while directly benefiting a small proportion of the population; and it diverts attention from the failures of recent Labour-led governments to reverse systematically the dramatic decline in living standards that most New Zealand families experienced during the 1990s. It also diverts attention from the impact of the current National-led government’s renewed enthusiasm for financial austerity. An examination of the real roots of privilege, wealth and power has, for the moment, been deflected. Indeed, the people who stand to benefit from the extension of current policies make up the small minority of privileged New Zealanders who have accrued considerable wealth under a pro-market, pro-business agenda fuelled principally by cuts to state spending on education, health and social welfare.

Conclusion

References to the Treaty of Waitangi in legislation, and the state’s recognition of historical grievances, both represent significant concessions after years of concerted struggle by Māori to combat the inequalities and racism that have underpinned New Zealand society. But these concessions have not compensated for policies that, since 1984, have dramatically widened social and economic inequalities.

Many Māori have been, and continue to be, critical of the Treaty of Waitangi settlement process and of the iwi governance structures created by that process. There is also much criticism of the lack of any significant trickle-down to tribal beneficiaries and Māori communities more generally. This is not to suggest that tribal corporate executives and Māori entrepreneurs are not in any sense committed to the improvement of the economic and social position of Māori. But their strategies for tribal development have so far been confined to the commercial framework of market capitalism.

The uncritical adoption of pro-market policies and corporate models for managing Treaty settlements only tends to institutionalise the inequalities of wealth and political power that exist within Māori communities and between Māori and non-Māori. For the vast majority of Māori families, any attempt to achieve self-determination within a system based on inequality and class exploitation is ultimately contradictory. Real change will require us to challenge the logic of the market, rather than extend its influence.

Marriage Equality Disabled people deserve to be able to marry without being ruined financially



[Allie Funk](#)

Jul 1

NOTE: This article relates to USA. Most of these issues apply similarly in NZ, but not every single issue.

<https://aninjusticemag.com/weve-never-had-marriage-equality-6b16b5e99239>

5 min read

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After the recent [Dobbs v. Jackson Women's Health Organization](#) decision by the United States Supreme Court, Justice Clarence Thomas wrote a concurring opinion urging the court to overturn other landmark decisions affecting the rights of individuals. One of the decisions Thomas mentioned was [Obergefell v. Hodges](#), which effectively legalized same-sex marriage.

Many have sounded the alarm over this opinion, calling it the beginning of the end for marriage equality. I don't disagree that this opinion is a sign of worse things to come, but I disagree that we've ever had marriage equality in the United States of America.

Disabled people have never experienced marriage equality.

The costs of being disabled and disability benefits

Being disabled is expensive. Healthcare, in general, is ridiculously expensive, and disabled people tend to need more medications, hospitalizations, and surgeries than the average person. Additionally, disabled people are more likely to be unemployed due to both the limitations of their disability and workplace discrimination. In the United States, [80% of disabled people](#) are unemployed.

In order to pay for both their healthcare and living expenses, many disabled people rely on disability benefits from the government. In order to fully discuss the issue of marriage inequality, it's important to understand a few of these [benefit types](#) and the strict requirements those who receive them must meet.

One of these benefits is Supplemental Security Income (SSI), which is a form of monthly income for those unable to work. According to the Social Security Administration (SSA), disabled people must be incapable of "substantial gainful activity," which as of 2022 is defined as full or part-time work totaling more than \$1,350 per month. They also can't have more than \$2,000 in assets, including cash, bank accounts, vehicles, and property. If the SSA believes you're giving away resources to meet the limits, they can deem you ineligible.

Medicaid, the program that provides health insurance coverage for disabled people, uses most of the same eligibility requirements as SSI. Even Medicaid buy-in programs designed for employed people with intense medical needs have income limits below the poverty line.

Another health insurance program, which includes SSI benefits, that's available to disabled people is Social Security Disability Insurance (SSDI). For those who became disabled later in life, the money taken by the SSA from their paychecks while they worked qualifies them for this program. This enables people to get insurance when they can't work anymore.

If someone has never worked due to an early onset disability, the money their parents paid to the SSA while they worked qualifies them for SSDI. Once their parent retires and starts collecting retirement benefits, the disabled person can start receiving SSDI on that parent's work record as a disabled adult child (DAC). The income and asset limits for SSI are used for this program as well.

As you can see, these requirements essentially force disabled people to live in poverty. They aren't allowed to save money, own property, or do part-time work when their body allows it. Most disabled people learn early on that hoops must be jumped through for basic needs to be met.

The consequences of marriage

When people in the United States get married, their assets are usually considered shared. This causes issues for disabled people who need government benefits to live.

Marriage is kind of like adoption for disabled people. Once a disabled person marries, they become the financial responsibility of their spouse in much the same way a child is the responsibility of their parent. If someone receiving SSDI as a DAC gets married, they're immediately removed from the program. The spouse is now expected to provide the care that was previously the responsibility of the parent.

The spouse of a disabled person has their income and assets calculated with the disabled person, and the insurance they receive through their job usually won't cover all of a disabled person's medical expenses. When married, the asset limit for SSI and Medicaid increases, but only to \$3,000. This means if your spouse has any job, savings, or vehicle, you're probably ineligible for benefits.

Many disabled people have to choose between having their needs met and getting married. It's pretty easy to guess what most people will choose when getting married can literally kill you. In this way, marriage equality has been systematically denied to disabled people.

Legal barriers to marriage

Some states take marriage inequality [one step further](#), making it illegal for some disabled people to marry. Back when eugenics was something people were openly proud of, many states passed laws banning people with "genetic defects" from marrying. While these laws are rarely enforced today, many weren't repealed. This means that family members who disapprove of marriage

have a legal path to stopping it if one of the spouses has a disability caused by a genetic defect.

There are also many laws [preventing intellectually disabled people](#) from marrying. If a person is determined to have an IQ below 70, they're considered to have a severe intellectual disability and typically can't get married legally. This is designed to protect people who can't make their own decisions from being exploited.

However, IQ testing [has been criticized](#) for not being an accurate measurement of someone's intelligence. These tests are designed around very privileged, Eurocentric populations, so people who don't grow up in these backgrounds are likely to score lower because they lack the relevant cultural and educational experience. Additionally, standardized tests such as these are generally more indicative of how well someone has prepared and how good they are at test-taking than the factors the test purports to measure.

These problems with IQ testing create marriage equality with these laws, as people can be capable of making decisions but score low on IQ tests due to other factors. As with the genetic defect laws, this can allow disgruntled family members to stop a marriage legally.

Choosing our battles

I understand that people are worried about the implications of Justice Thomas' opinion on various existing rights. I'm worried about that too; however, I think it's important with something like marriage equality to acknowledge that this right hasn't existed for everyone.

A disabled friend of mine who's also a lesbian has talked about how frustrating it's been to hear people talk about how we're headed back to a time when people couldn't marry whoever they wanted. It's frustrating for her to hear her community say this when that right never existed for her and her other community. This isn't a conflict between two separate communities.

Fight back on the Thomas agenda, but be mindful of how you talk about the issue of marriage equality. Talking about marriage equality as a battle won will cause pushback from those who never stopped fighting, and we don't need to be fighting each other right now. We should be fighting for each other, as rights denied to one minority can just as easily be denied to another.

Identity and Identifying

How does a disabled person unlearn ableism This is how I learned to love my mobility aids

Brooke Mott

<https://www.abc.net.au/triplej/programs/hack/mobility-aids-young-people/13637540>

Unlearning able-ism is unlearning the **internalisation** of the prejudices.

Posted Wed 1 Dec 2021, 6:00am

Updated Tue 30 Nov 2021, 5:04pm

It took time for me to love my mobility aids. Now I've never been prouder to use them



Image:

Back in 2019, I suffered a major MS relapse that rendered my already-weak left leg to a state of being dragged behind me as I tried to walk.

Prior to this relapse, I would just battle through flares. I'm incredibly stubborn and wasn't ready to admit that I needed to slow down, let alone ready to admit that I needed mobility aids to function well. I was using a cane, but only as a tool to keep moving. I felt defeated that I needed it at all.

Mobility aids - which are devices that help a person move around, like a cane, wheelchair or walker - symbolised my impending disability. When evaluating severity of MS, therapists use a scale called the Expanded Disability Status Scale or EDSS. MS is a progressive condition and I viewed mobility aids like stepping stones on the way to severe disease.

Needing more mobility aids made me feel like I was moving along this chart faster than I would've liked

Society had taught me that disability is tragic, so I wasn't ready to claim the title of "disabled" but I also didn't even feel entitled to do so. I didn't feel "disabled enough" to use disability parking spaces despite being only able to walk less than 500m without rest. I felt worried about what people would think if they saw me using a disabled park with only a cane. Would they think I was faking it? .

The stigma of walkers for young people

The adjustment from using a cane to a walker was the most difficult transition I experienced.

Walkers come with an intense stigma for younger disabled people because of the assumption that they're only for older people.

My bright red walker

Who said canes have to look boring?

I'm not sure if it was my inner desire to defy social norms, but I began to think about this whole situation similarly to being judged for dressing in alt fashion in my younger years. I decided that if I had no choice in this situation, then I would do it in the most loud and proud way I could. Fight back at the stigma. I started researching walkers, determined that if I found the right aid that represented my personality, then I could make this work.

It was when I came across the #babeswithmobilityaids tag on Instagram where I found many disabled people sharing their stories and really advocating for positive disability visibility that I felt instantly more comfortable with the changes happening. I started to embrace being disabled: If they could do then so could I! This visibility gave me the confidence to literally roll ahead.

Nina Tame is a disability advocate who has helped me unlearn my own ableism. She posts about celebrating and embracing her mobility aids

Image:

[@nina_tame, Instagram](#)

Author and disability advocate Tara Moss helps break the stigma of mobility aids. Her manual wheelchair is the same as mine, but in red

Image:

[@taramossauthor, Instagram](#)

I found a bright red, unconventional walker to signal that I was proud of my mobility aid. My disability wasn't, in fact, as much of a tragedy as society might have thought.

What it's like to get intrusive questions

Despite it helping me mentally make the shift to the aid I needed at that time, it didn't stop the intrusive questions around such a sensitive topic. It didn't stop the random, "Oh, what have you done there love?", or the complete and utter confused looks from passers-by, or worst of all, the very pitying stares from strangers at the shops. I could've been walking along, forgetting that I even had a disability that day, then an intrusive question comes out of nowhere, and suddenly I would be reminded that my life can be more difficult sometimes.

Out and about, with help from my wheelchair

There are days where it takes all my energy to constantly adapt so that I can access the world around me because access needs are often not met. Before I visit a new place, the checklist begins: Is the place accessible? Does the venue even have accessibility information on its website? Will my wheelchair manage the slopes? What's the parking like? How far away is the parking from the front door? Will I need to get a wheelchair taxi instead?

By the time I get there, I don't have time or energy to share the details of my disabled life to strangers on the street. As you can see, the mobility issues that I face aren't the most disabling thing, it's navigating a world that doesn't factor in disabled people. And that's just for my physical disability when I am accessing the community alone. The challenges significantly increase when I plan an outing with my neurodivergent family, which requires planning for sensory needs too.

Navigating ableism as a disabled person

Over the years, I've realised something pretty important: accepting that I had a disability was fundamental to me being able to actually live and enjoy my life. The thing that was holding me back all along was ableism. Yes - a person with a disability can struggle with ableism, too.

I would constantly push myself to walk further than the capacity I had. It didn't matter what my capacity, the goal was always for it to be better, for me to do better, even if it meant taking the rest

of the day to sleep. After over a year of switching between my cane, my walker and my off-the-shelf-barely-moves-when-you-push wheelchair, I finally received my custom built manual wheelchair. Words cannot describe how much I love this wheelchair and by accepting my disabled body, I was able to start actively loving my life again *because* of my wheelchair, not in spite of it.

My awesome 4WD wheelchair allows me to go on bushwalks

From when a child is born, it's always about benchmarks and milestones. Did they walk at the right time? Did they speak at the right time? Did they learn to read at the right time? But really, there is no right time for anything. The right time is when the individual is ready and if it benefits that person to function in that way. Disabled bodies aren't a problem that needs to be fixed, they are a natural part of life. It's so important for people to remember that anyone, at any point in their life, can become disabled.

So, what needs to change?

We've been raised by generations who had a "don't look, don't ask" approach to disability. What we really need for true change around disability is open (but not intrusive) conversations. Don't be afraid to say hello to disabled people, treat us just like you would everyone else. [Nina Tame](#), a disability advocate from the UK uses the example of glasses as an assistive device and how strange intrusive questions can be. You wouldn't ask someone what is wrong with their eyes when they're wearing glasses, but you may let them know that you like their glasses!

The truth is that the stigma around mobility aids is a very tangible example of the micro-aggressions experienced by disabled folks each and every day. By creating a positive narrative around mobility aids, we can be actively inclusive of disabled people. Every empowering conversation, every disabled person you actively include takes us one step closer to tackling ableism.

So, I want to finish this story by leaving you with some things to remember about mobility aids.

Treat the mobility aid as part of the user's personal space; do not touch or lean on the aid

Ask before giving any assistance

Direct your comments to the person with the disability, not their support person.

Language matters: A person may be a wheelchair user, but they're not 'wheelchair-bound' or 'confined to a wheelchair'

Some wheelchair users can walk and may use their wheelchair part time or in certain circumstances.

Some disabled people use a variety of mobility aids such as canes, crutches, walkers, manual wheelchairs and powered wheelchairs.

Mobility aids may be used for a wide variety of reasons such as unsteady gait, impaired balance, muscle weakness, fatigue, risk of falls, joint dislocations.

Understand that there is no specific way that disability looks, many disabilities are completely invisible

Not everyone with a disability wishes to discuss it or its limitations. Wait until you know an individual before asking personal questions. Be sure to use phrases like "do you mind if I ask..." rather than expecting the question to be answered.

How will you manage How disabled women are forced into surgical procedures for sterilisation

<https://www.thenewsminute.com/article/how-will-you-manage-how-disabled-women-are-forced-surgical-procedures-158193>

‘How will you manage?’ How disabled women are forced into surgical procedures

Many women with disabilities are advised or coerced into surgical procedures under the pretext of convenience and physical safety, violating their bodily autonomy, often by those closest to them.



IMAGE FOR REPRESENTATION. BY ADVERTISINGMEDIA28/PICXY

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[Geetika Mantri](#) [Follow @geetikamantri](#)

Nearly a decade ago, Smitha*, who lives with cerebral palsy, underwent a surgery to remove fibroids from her uterus. The doctors, at the time, asked if she wanted to get a hysterectomy — a procedure to surgically remove her uterus— done to help her ‘manage’ her period. Smitha, now in her forties, refused. Five years after her surgery, she had a health issue which led her to menstruate for a month at a stretch.

“My family questioned my decision to not get a hysterectomy earlier when I had the chance”, Smitha told Behanbox. “They would not have suggested this to someone with a similar health condition who was not disabled.”

Like Smitha, many women with disabilities are advised, or indeed coerced into surgical procedures under the pretext of convenience and physical safety, violating their bodily

autonomy and consent over their sexual and reproductive rights, often by those closest to them.

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Women with Disabilities India Network (WWDIN), a cross disability network run by women with disabilities, collected testimonies of women, many of them minors, who were forced to undergo hysterectomies or sterilisations in the 'Alternative Report', a document submitted to the United Nations Convention on the Rights of Person with Disabilities (UNCRPD) Committee in response to the initial report submitted by the government of India. The alternative report collated data from interviews with 441 women with disabilities across 23 Indian states between 2017 and 2018.

The report noted that not only are services like contraception and abortion denied to women with disabilities, especially those with intellectual or psychosocial disabilities, they are also coerced into hysterectomies, sterilisation, contraception and abortions.

"Frequently, when these women are minors or are deprived of legal capacity, guardians, parents, or doctors may make the decision on their behalf", stated the report. "Even when they are not deprived of legal capacity, they may be pressured to undergo sterilisation based on false assumptions about their sexuality and ability to parent, or based on the desire to control their menstrual cycles."

India has at least 11.8 million women and girls living with disabilities, according to the 2011 census. These numbers appear to be underestimates, since the census enumerated persons under seven categories, while the Rights of Persons with

Disabilities Act (RPWD) legislated in 2016 recognises twenty one categories of disabilities.

Sections 10 and 25 of the act stipulate that the state must ensure persons with disabilities have “access to appropriate information regarding reproductive and family planning”, and provide “sexual and reproductive healthcare especially for women with disability.”

Yet, in the absence of disaggregated government data on persons with disabilities, evidence, sparse as it may be, such as the Alternative Report, show that women’s autonomy over their sexual and reproductive health is repeatedly violated by families, caregivers and the medical system.

Forced hysterectomies: A history

The first recorded case of organised forced hysterectomies came to light in 1994 in Pune. That year, the Maharashtra government allowed a team of doctors to conduct the procedure on twenty-one women residents of the Government certified School of Mentally Deficient Girls in Shirur area of the city.

The procedure was already carried out on eleven women between the ages of 18 and 35 years, before it was stopped when activist Ahilya Rangnekar brought this to the attention of the then Chief Minister, Sharad Pawar.

In all these instances, parents of the women supported the decision of the institution to conduct the hysterectomies under the garb of managing their menstruation. Dr Shirish Sheth, the gynaecologist who performed the surgeries, was reportedly quoted then by a newspaper, saying that the operations were done to prevent pregnancy in the women, who “often became victims of sexual assault.”

The incident caused widespread outrage, spurring protests by women’s groups and activists, including outside the Sassoon Hospital, where the procedures were performed on the eleven women.

“People are making a big fuss about these operations but you should come and stay with these girls. They all mess up their menstrual discharge. Being anaemic they feel fatigued during their periods”, S.M Sonwane, the superintendent of the Shirur home, was quoted as saying in the Frontline magazine.

Following the incident, a report titled ‘In the Guise of Human Dignity’, looked at conditions in four other institutions for people with intellectual disabilities — Beru Matimand Prastisthan (Pune), Mankhurd Children’s Home (Mumbai), Asha Daan (Mumbai), and Institute of Human Behaviour and Allied Sciences (Delhi). In the first two institutions, there was a tacit expectation that hysterectomies would have to be completed on women before they were admitted to the homes. In all these homes,

including the Shirur home, the report's authors found that the women and girls lived in deplorable conditions of neglect.

"It is glaringly obvious that the hysterectomy option has been chosen because, for the caretakers, it means that much less work, and for the authorities, less expenditure incurred on attendants' salaries", stated the report.

The protesting organisations had also pointed out that hysterectomies could even be counterproductive as it could increase the risk of sexual abuse if there was no possibility of finding out about the abuse when pregnancy is eliminated.

The report, put together by several women's rights groups, took down the 'hygiene' and 'opportunity to live with dignity' argument offered by Dr Sheth and others:

"Interestingly none of these messiahs of modern science refer to the need for more attendants, trained caretakers, increased budgetary allocations, accountability of staff and officers who run our institutions, more recreational facilities, employment avenues, medical care, psychiatric counselling or simply protecting the rights of handicapped persons."

In spite of the widespread outrage by women's groups in 1994, the government of Maharashtra, in 2008, supported a policy of forcibly sterilizing "mentally challenged" women and girls in institutions as a means of ensuring "menstrual hygiene" or the elimination of periods.

Even in 2017, the alternate report prepared by the WWDIN documents forced hysterectomies of minor girls. "In Andhra Pradesh's Mehboobnagar Block, rural women spoke of hysterectomy as being a common method being used on girls with intellectual disability. At least 20 cases had been documented", states the report.

25 years after the Shirur incident, Behanbox asked women with disabilities and social workers to understand the prevalence of coercive surgical procedures like hysterectomy or sterilisations. The result painted a different but concerning picture.

'Safety' and 'management'

Ten years ago, Porkodi Palaniappan, the founder of Better Chances, a wellness centre for people with psycho-social disabilities, met a mother of a pre-teen girl with intellectual disability who wanted to get a medical procedure for her daughter to stop her menstruation.

"The woman, from a rural area, was unable to manage the bodily changes her daughter was going through and was worried about the possibility of sexual abuse. A doctor had recommended that her uterus be removed, so she did not have to worry if she was raped. It was really irresponsible of the doctor," said Palaniappan.

Ultimately, the mother decided against hysterectomy after Palaniappan advised her against it.

“But this is a common apprehension since, in our society, the idea of protection comes with the notion of covering up potential sexual abuse rather than preventing it,” she said.

Enquiries to gynaecologists on hysterectomies for young women with disabilities were a common occurrence even a decade ago, said Shampa Sengupta, a Kolkata-based activist working on gender and disability rights.

“Parents were only keen to know if there were medical implications of such a procedure. The concept of consent was alien to them,” said Sengupta.

“One gynaecologist we spoke to, even said that he thought he was doing a favour by performing the hysterectomy on a woman with intellectual disability who was in her twenties,” she says.

In recent years the availability of sterilization methods using certain drugs is being tried out on a large scale instead of teaching the women to manage menstrual hygiene and protecting them from rape, states the alternate report. Despite a government order (GR.No. 24) of 1999, there is no legal provision that prohibits non-consensual sterilization. In 2006, the Ministry of Health issued guidelines for sterilization which state that women and men should be between the ages of 22 and 49 and “of sound state of mind so as to understand the full implications of sterilization.”

Meenakshi Balasubramanian, Associate at the Centre for Inclusive Policy, an organisation that advocates for inclusion of disadvantaged groups in policies and programmes, notes that the notion that disabled women cannot be capable parents, prompts families of disabled women to rob them of the choice.

“The family views a pregnancy which is a result of sexual abuse as an additional responsibility because of their assumption that the woman will be unable to care for the child”, said Balasubramanian. “In the absence of a supportive system, the entire onus falls on the individual,” said Balasubramanian, who is also the co-founder of Chennai-based Equals Centre for Promotion of Social Justice, a disability rights organisation.

The stigma and lack of disability-friendly infrastructure isolates families and caregivers, which is further exacerbated by socio-economic conditions. 69% of disabled population in India lives in rural areas according to the 2011 census with inadequate support, fewer resources and information. In a case documented by the Alternative Report, the parents of a 23-year-old woman with an intellectual disability, who worked as daily wage labour, forced her to get a hysterectomy, supported by the doctor, to avoid “unwanted pregnancy”.

Janet Price, a feminist and disability rights campaigner in the UK and India noted in a 2018 report on [Sexuality and Disability in the Indian Context](#) by [TARSHI](#), a Delhi-based non-profit working on issues of sexuality, that unlike the western countries where sexuality is an individual issue, southern countries view it as a family or community affair.

Social workers like Sengupta say that queries around forced surgical procedures have dwindled now and attribute this to the passage of the RPWD act among other factors.

A 2017 paper on [Disability and Sexuality](#) notes that while the RPWD Act has enlarged the 'political space for discussions related to disability', activists also point out that the law has not adequately encouraged debate on women's sexual and reproductive autonomy.

"The discourse with respect to disability has generally been around employment, education and other familiar aspects, but not so much around the gender dimension and autonomy. The act still subscribes to a guardianship regime," said Balasubramanian.

Section 92 (f) of the RPWD Act, which lists punishable offences and atrocities against persons with disabilities allows for the termination of pregnancy in 'severe cases of disability and with the opinion of a registered medical practitioner and also with the consent of the guardian of the woman with disability'.

Enabling autonomy

While forced surgical procedures may have dwindled, the apprehension of parents has not.

"The common question most parents have is 'how will we train our intellectually disabled child to manage menstruation'?", said Bahni Bhattacharyya Mandal, a Kolkata-based special educator.

In the absence of vocabulary and accessible tools around menstruation, parents and caregivers are turning to other intrusive surgical methods, violating autonomy and consent.

More recently they have resorted to surgical options like tubal ligation or contraceptive implants and injections. Tubal ligation, a surgical procedure where the fallopian tubes are either blocked or removed, is used to stop pregnancy permanently. Contraceptive implants, where a small device is inserted under the skin which releases progesterone into the bloodstream and contraceptive injections are also being resorted to by families and medical professionals to stop pregnancies. In most cases, the consent of women is never sought.

“This is largely to prevent pregnancy rather than an acknowledgement of the woman’s own sexuality and agency. Some of these women are over the age of 25-30. Many of them are not made aware of what the procedure they are going through is”, said Mandal.

She told us about two instances in recent times where parents of girls with intellectual disabilities resorted to tubal ligation to stop their menstruation. Neither would admit it on record, says Mandal.

It is a popular misconception that girls and women with disabilities cannot learn to manage menstruation and personal hygiene or are unaware of their sexuality. Activists and educators believe that they can be taught early in their life and in tools they are comfortable with. For older women with intellectual disabilities, it may prove to be difficult but not entirely impossible.

Seema*, a 24-year-old with intellectual disabilities and a student of vocational training at Vidya Sagar Centre for Special Education in Chennai, says that she was able to learn about menstruation quite early with the help of the school and her parents.

“My parents and teachers had shown me what a pad was and how it needed to be used before I got my period in class 9. So, I was prepared”, she says.

“Girls with intellectual disabilities need to be taught in a language that *they* understand, such as with pictures and images if not words”, said Mandal, who has a daughter who is on the autism spectrum with limited speech. Mandal had begun teaching her since she was eight years old about maintaining hygiene, the frequency of changing and disposal of her sanitary pads among other things.

“There are some girls who have very high support needs. But even for them, hysterectomies are not the solution. The onus is on caregivers to manage it,” says Sangeeta Saksena, the co-founder of [Enfold Proactive Health Trust](#) in Bengaluru, which has developed a [Suvidha kit](#) for children for personal safety and sexuality education.

While there has been some discussion on building a vocabulary in Indian Sign Language on sexuality including menstrual hygiene management, there isn’t enough focus on [Augmentative and Alternative Communication](#) (AAC) — modes of communication other than spoken or oral language which uses gestures, visuals, writing, or a speech generating device — used by people with high support needs, says Balasubramanian.

“There’s barely any conversation and research and development on ways of communicating sexual and reproductive desires for people with high support needs.

The initiative is restricted to a few NGOs and neither the union nor state governments have taken this up”, she adds.

Disability friendly infrastructure and products are another hindrance in enabling disabled persons’ exercise their autonomy. Almost all women, living with disabilities we spoke to, said that inaccessible and unhygienic public toilets discourage them from venturing out during their menstruation.

Menstrual products are not designed keeping people with disabilities in mind. Smitha tells us her ordeal as a wheelchair user.

“Because I was in a wheelchair most of the time, the pad would move, and I would not be able to adjust it. I had to use two pads and secure them with safety pins. It was dangerous, as the pins could come undone and hurt me.” she said.

“I would tie a thread tightly around my waist to keep my underwear secure so that it doesn’t move along with the pad”, said Silsila, another wheelchair user based in Guwahati, who works as a project coordinator of Bijoyini, a network of women with various disabilities.

Tools around menstrual and reproductive hygiene also need to be accessible and culturally and scientifically appropriate. Enfold’s material which demystifies sexuality, for instance, is available in screen reader-friendly formats. The Suvidha kit contains visuals, puzzles, games, puppets and charts. It is important that the language should not be stigmatising, says Saksena.

“We need to avoid words that have negative connotations when we refer to private parts or menstruation. We need to avoid words like ‘stain’ and instead say ‘blood that comes on the clothes’”, she said, emphasizing that it is important to language that is respectful of our bodies to caregivers, teachers, and boys.

**Names changed to protect identities*

[This report, which was first published on [Behanbox](#) on November 25, 2021, is part of the Spotlight Media fellowship. The fellowship is a collaboration between [Rising Flame](#) and BehanBox to report on the violence and exclusion faced by women and trans persons with disabilities in India.

Rising Flame is a nonprofit organisation based in India, working for recognition, protection, and promotion of human rights of People with Disabilities, particularly women and youth with disabilities. It is the Recipient for the National Award for Empowerment of Persons with Disabilities 2019.]

Geetika Mantri is a senior editor with The News Minute. She has reported extensively on gender, sexual violence, mental health, and child sexual abuse.

I'm Not Hyper Focusing On My Disability You Are The only disability in life is a bad attitude

No, I'm Not "Hyper Focusing" On My Disability, You Are

"The only disability in life is a bad attit-" With all due respect, no.

Abby is refusing to **internalise** the social prejudices around her.



[Abby Katherine](#)

Mar 13

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9 min read

<https://aninjusticemag.com/no-im-not-hyper-focusing-on-my-disability-you-are-3d866369a88c>

[Listen](#)



Me around age six. My red hair is tied in a white ribbon, I'm wearing a pink floral top, white Capri pants, and leg braces almost my knees. I'm smiling and standing on the grass.

CW: this article discusses ableism and its impact on mental health, I know firsthand that this is very difficult to process, especially if you have dealt with it. Read if you feel able and take care of yourself. Sending my love and gratitude.

“Don’t let your disability define you.”

I’ve lived almost 20 years as a disabled woman. Though I didn’t take my first steps until the age of 5, I’ve had no choice but to grow up in a hyper condensed amount of time. I’ve been forever bonded to the multitudes disabled life contains — the beautiful and the ugly. I’m not shocked by others’ bizarre

behavior at this point. But I can't wrap my head around the fact that people expect me to *transcend* my disability...I'm not even sure what that would look like. The closest thing I can think of would be my soul leaving my body, and that requires one of three things: drugs, dying, or being at a Taylor Swift concert every waking hour of my life. Choose your fighter! (To note: I choose the never-ending T Swift concert).

So, with those scenarios being completely unrealistic, I'm screwed in the transcendence department. Luckily, I have another unsolicited suggestion, to forget my disability, let it run its course, and just flip everyone off who can't handle my presence. This ideology is one I've developed several hypotheses for and have tested out many times (the flipping people off part symbolically, though, I don't have the fine motor skills or the guts to give the bird on a whim). Guess what? It doesn't work, not even close. And when I tell people that this transcendental excursion and forced positivity fails, their faces turn inquisitive and frustrated, they begin to spew things like:

"You're hyper-focusing on your disability,"

**after I ask for assistance* "you underestimate your capability, push harder."*

"Don't wallow in your disability, that's victimhood."

*"You should be more like this disabled person," *shows me social media post* "they are just so positive and inspirational despite their circumstances. That mindset would be good for you."*

For the record, it's only been in recent years I've started to let go of the unrealistic expectation to be an ultra-positive disabled person. I only really

discuss the negatives if I open up to someone. But otherwise, I'm still constantly trying to embody this expectation because it feels like the only way to be taken seriously.

"Just don't let it define you."

"Don't let your disability win!"

"People are probably being nice, you're just overthinking."

"You weren't bold enough."

In many cases, the people who tell me their revolutionary ideas are the **same** people who *can't shut up* about my disability. They bring it up in every conversation, ask invasive questions, erase my pain and heartache as well as my joys and successes, treat me as inhuman, and then expect me to stop hyper-focusing on my "issues." Am I really the one fixating on my disability here? I don't think so. I was just asking if you pour your cereal or milk first, and now we're halfway through my extensive medical history.

It's taken a long time for me to realize this pattern because it becomes internalized. I become angry at myself for existing. No stomach bug can nauseate me the way this feeling does; this feeling of inadequacy and inhumanity just because I'm disabled. Just because my body is different. Just because sometimes I have plastic and metal on my feet, neck, and back. Just because I struggle walking and look different. Is this feeling that leaves me so frozen worth it?

Why do these suggestions, comments, and statements cut so deep?

Even if it's done without malintent, telling someone they "hyper-focus" on their marginalized identity and/or that they should "just be grateful", "push harder" or "just stay positive" is, in my opinion, the equivalent of spilling gasoline onto the already roaring fire of painful division blazing throughout the world. Well-intended people saying or implying these things will never get it, but they don't have to, empathy doesn't require experience. I feel bad to admit that it's growing hard for me to find grace for these people anymore, so I keep quiet and make myself smaller.

To these people, I must kindly ask, If you "don't see disability", why do you whisper it like a dirty secret before introducing me to others or referring to me when I'm not there? Why do you have to look *past* my disability as if it's a boulder blocking a stunning view? Is it scary? A turn-off? Does it make me inhuman? My disability doesn't make up the entirety of my being, but it's a huge component of who I am, and I need people to see it. Erasing it would be inauthentic.



My little sister pushing me (age 13) in my wheelchair post my double reconstructive foot surgery. (Photo by author)

I can't stop thinking about my disability if the world can't.

It's not necessarily my decision, but most days I wake up and chase certain inner chaos in order to survive. I get so angry and distraught with how I'm treated that I attempt ghosting my disability, living my life without showing any "weakness", letting things flow without making a scene, not caring what others think, and taking the suggestions I typically resent. That sounds like a good idea, right? Allow me to illustrate what the chaos looks like in motion:

A day in denial.

I wake up. *Cool*. I decide I can't take living like this anymore. It's too early for thought so haunting. I come to the realization that I can either a) disappear under my duvet for the rest of time, or b) get up regardless and turn my anger into strength. *Trick question: I don't get that choice, so it's option B.*

Electrical currents of pain course throughout my entire body. Wait, I can't acknowledge that, it's related to the thing I'm avoiding. *Get up*. The toothpaste tube and the weakness in my hands go to battle. *Let the day begin*. My body feels like it's going to give out. I pretend not to notice. People are staring, but it's probably in my head. *Just be you*. My pain has me on the verge of tears during class. I widen my smile until my face is contorted into an odd smirk. "*Atta girl,*" the voices of those who have shrunk my ring in my ears. *Focus*.

Post 10:40 am class, I'm hungry. I make my way to the cafeteria. *Look at me, queen of independence, disability who?* I pull out my phone to use Apple Pay but I can't double click the button, I'm fumbling. *Apple just forgot to make this accessible, it's okay! I'll accommodate!* I have to pay cash. *Breathe*. The cashier audibly whispers to her co-worker "she's struggling" as a decent-sized line forms behind me. I don't have the heart nor do I have the range of motion to look back. I struggle with the wadded \$20 from Christmas in the pocket of my elastic jeans (I can't button regular ones). I give her the cash. She makes a point to further emphasize my struggle. *Should I curse her out?* I can't pick up the change. I leave some coins sitting on the counter. I drop dollar bills. I struggle to assemble a paper bag and throw the cash right in next to my food. *Gross, but I have no choice*. Eyes bore into me, but *maybe not? Maybe I'm delusional. Probably.*

Anyways, *I did it!* I force positive affirmations through my head like the Shakespeare sonnets we had to memorize for high school poetry class – something about darling buds of May? *I’m unstoppable.* Tears are *not* welling in my eyes as I walk back to the location of my next class. My pain level is off the scale, making this seemingly mundane experience some semblance of a nightmare. *Just get through it.* The day goes on. I fall hard on the tile because someone forgot to dry the floor. Concerned faces haunt my peripheral. *It’s cool! Everyone falls, maybe it’s quirky!* Despite my fear, I start small talk with classmates to combat this all-consuming isolation. I’m met with half-hearted sighs and sometimes talked to as if I’m a toddler.

*I’ve got to be an awful person – their behavior is most likely unrelated to the fact that I’m so confusingly configured and that they all just saw me eat shit, right? I can’t play the victim and blame my disability. **But I know the truth like the back of my hand, I’ve lived it. It is my disability, making me mystically invisible and hyper-visible simultaneously.*** This is all too much. I’m done pretending. ***How am I supposed to transcend my disability in a world that repeatedly obsesses over it and tells me (silently and blaringly) that my existence is either a burden or an after-thought?***

“Band-aids don’t fix bullet holes”

I must admit it, dear reader, after letting all of that out, I’m scared. I fear that people will think I’m trying to write myself into some “woe-is-me” plotline. I’m not. My life isn’t a sad story, it’s complex, and that’s beautiful. Reducing myself to a black and white tragedy would erase the entire argument of this essay, erase my life’s purpose, and simply serve as untrue. I am not a sob story or a being whose only purpose is to remind people that they “have it good”. I’m a writer, artist, sister, daughter, friend, student, stranger, listener, and human. I’m writing this because it’s about time we disabled folks can embrace ourselves as humans, but ***you have to meet us halfway.*** Deciding not to care what

others think of you is a luxury we don't have. I chose to give this example of an average day in my life to illustrate that I depend on what others think or in most cases, don't think. If buying food is inaccessible, I forego my lunch. If I can't open a water bottle, I'll just have to wait until there's something I can drink. If there's no elevator, I take on steep stairs despite the danger. If someone refuses me a basic job opportunity because of my disability, I don't have money.

I'm not, in any way, trying to paint disabled life as tragic, but the way society treats us **is**. We are not at fault. I wrote this essay in an attempt to make sense of all the backward logic that has been thrust upon me. This is our reality, we live in a world that isn't built for us, and we are reminded of it in **all we do**. Just because we've grown used to it doesn't mean it isn't soul-crushing.

If you have an open wound, you can't just ignore it, be positive, leave it untreated, let it bleed, and expect it to heal. You must acknowledge the wound, cover it in salve, problem solve, and adapt in order to truly heal and finally wear that scar with pride.

This is the same thing as allowing disabled people to acknowledge the pain of living in an ableist society instead of telling them to just keep going or be more positive. We must be relentless in the pursuit to make the world equal for all, lives depend on it.

I can't help but wonder what the world would look like for us if instead of being encouraged to look and move past our disabilities, we were encouraged to embrace them. I believe that's where the healing begins.

Thank you so, so much for reading this. I wrote this in hope that it sheds some light on disability being so misunderstood and also as a reminder to listen to marginalized voices, especially if what we're saying is uncomfortable. Sending all of my love, gratitude, and respect, Abby Katherine Say "hi" on Medium and Instagram (if you want to, of course) @snabbersnails

A Boy With Autism Was Forced to Leave a Church He [eventually] Got an Apology.

The chapel at King's College, Cambridge. Credit Tom Jamieson for The New York Times

<https://www.nytimes.com/2019/06/19/world/europe/cambridge-chapel-autism.html>



The chapel at King's College, Cambridge. Credit Credit Tom Jamieson for The New York Times

By Alan Yuhas

June 19, 2019

For Father's Day, Paul Rimmer headed to a service at the centuries-old Gothic chapel that he liked to visit in Cambridge, England, this time bringing his son, Tristan, 9, with him.

Tristan was enjoying the service — staring at the ceiling in awe, laughing happily — when an usher approached. The boy was being disruptive, the usher said, and needed to leave.

When Mr. Rimmer explained that his son, who is autistic, was expressing his excitement by laughing and calling out, the usher was apologetic but unmoved.

After leaving, Mr. Rimmer sent a letter to the chapel's leadership and posted it on Facebook, setting off a reaction that drew a public apology from the dean of chapel at King's College, Cambridge, and an outpouring of support from families who had also felt discriminated against or stigmatized because of autism.

"I thought it would've gotten 50 or 60 likes," Mr. Rimmer said about the letter in an interview. "And that would have been the end of it."

Instead, thousands of people shared his letter, a reaction that Mr. Rimmer attributed in part to “a sense that church and church worship should be open to everyone, that a church is a universal place.”

In [his letter](#) to the Rev. Dr. Stephen Cherry, the dean of chapel at King’s College, Cambridge, Mr. Rimmer was scathing.

“My son might not be able to talk, but he knows perfectly well what is going on around him,” Mr. Rimmer wrote. “He isn’t even 10 years old and he knows that he is unwelcome. If only places like King’s College made it clear what kind of spectators were acceptable, my son wouldn’t be subjected to rejection, and the other people there, to his unpalatable presence.”

The post was shared thousands of times on Facebook and garnered thousands of comments, some invoking Jesus’s words in the Bible, [“let the little children come to me.”](#) Others recalled their own experiences of feeling scorned. Parents described [“judgmental” glares](#) they’d received while shopping, requests to [“control your children,”](#) and [scoldings](#) from [members of church staff](#) and congregants.

More than a quarter of autistic people and their families have been asked to leave a public place because of reasons related to autism, according to the [National Autistic Society](#), a British advocacy group.

“For autistic people and their families, it’s probably almost a universal experience,” said Tom Purser, the head of campaigns for the group, which estimates there are about 700,000 autistic people in Britain.

“Our research showed that people feel unwelcome, they feel judged in public, people roll their eyes, they tut, they stare or make unhelpful or horrible comments,” Mr. Purser said.

Mr. Rimmer said that he and his wife have had similar experiences at movie theaters or concert venues in the United States and Britain. A parishioner at a Catholic church in London had once reprimanded him and his son, he said, only for a priest to interrupt and ask that person to leave.

Late Monday, Dr. Cherry apologized to Mr. Rimmer on Facebook and [on his personal blog](#). He denied that he had given any instructions to expel the family and said he had been “devastated” to learn what had happened.

“Nonetheless as dean I do take responsibility for the whole life of the Chapel and in that regard I express my unreserved apology,” he wrote.

“Every week we welcome thousands of people to services in King’s Chapel and we do our best to meet all their various needs and expectations,” he wrote. “Sometimes we fail and I realize that we especially failed you and Tristan.”

He asked to meet with Mr. Rimmer, who agreed. Tamsin Starr, a spokeswoman for Cambridge University, declined to comment on how the chapel might “do better in the future,” as the dean wrote.

The dean’s response was a sign that institutions and those who run them are growing more accepting of people with autism, said Dorothy Siegel, a longtime special education advocate and the co-founder of the ASD Nest program, [a project for autistic students](#) in New York’s public schools. “It is more acceptable for people to be a little bit more different now,” Ms. Siegel said.

Another Facebook post that [went viral last month](#), for instance, was about how an employee of Universal Orlando Resort had tried to comfort an autistic boy who had been disappointed by a broken ride.

“It’s not about always making sure that nothing ever goes wrong,” said Mr. Purser of the National Autistic Society. “It’s about when someone says, ‘My son’s autistic,’ then people know what that means, they’ve had some training and they know how to respond.”

Institutions could better accommodate people with autism, the advocates said. A minister could announce before a service that some people may become emotional or excited about the music, for instance, or organizations could invite people with autism to special events.

“There’s lots of ways to deal with this,” Ms. Siegel said. But getting angry at a child “and kicking him out is not one of them.”

A version of this article appears in print on June 20, 2019, Section A, Page 6 of the New York edition with the headline: His Autistic Son Was Pushed Out of Church. He Pushed Back.. [Order Reprints](#) | [Today’s Paper](#) | [Subscribe](#)

Revd Dr Stephen Cherry 17 June, 2019

King's College, King's Parade

Cambridge CB2 1ST

Dear Reverend Dr Stephen Cherry,

I would like to apologize for bringing my autistic son to Evensong at your chapel. I am a resident of Cambridge and a member of the university, and my family and I have attended services at the chapel from time to time. I have always been inspired by the beauty of the building, the worshipful attitude of the service, and the hospitality you have extended to the wider community, as stated in your most recent welcome letter which expressed your "hope that, whenever and however you share in the life of the Chapel, you will be inspired, encouraged and refreshed." I am proud to worship within a communion that is "asking the question, how can we enable disabled people to be at the heart of our communities, explore their vocation and realise their gifts?" (<https://www.churchofengland.org/more/church-resources/welcoming-disabled-people>).

I chose to attend Evensong on Trinity Sunday, also Father's Day, with my two sons, one of whom is autistic.

Tristan is nine years old, and is a clever and joyful child, who loves church buildings, services, and choral music. He is also non-verbal, and expresses his excitement by calling out and laughing. His expressions are often loud and uncontrollable. It is part of who he is, so there is no realistic way for him to be quiet. Many autistic people are like Tristan in this way. Right before the Kyrie, one of the ushers informed me that you had instructed him to remove us. Tristan's expressions were apparently interfering with the enjoyment of some of the other visitors, which was very inconsiderate on our part, because tourists come from all over the world to hear the Evensong. The usher seemed embarrassed but insistent as he asked us to leave, though I'm not sure if it was because of my son's vocalisations, or because of the nature of the directive you had given him.

As a Christian, I believe that worship is primarily intended to glorify God, and may have misinterpreted your

Evensong as an actual worship service, at which my son's expressions must surely be pleasing to God, the experience of other worshipers being secondary. Our removal makes more sense if Kings College's Evensong were simply a concert held in a building that used to be a chapel. Then my son's expressions would frustrate the purpose of the event, which is primarily performative; lessening the satisfaction of certain tourists around the world who attend, but not those kinds of people you deem to be too distracting. If this is so, I apologize.

Might I suggest that you place a sign at the front of the chapel, clearly identifying which categories of people are welcome and which are not? I can only imagine how terrible it would be if autistic people, others with disabilities, those with mental illnesses, and people with dementia, were all equally welcome to attend Evensong, how this would get in the way of the choir's performance, how it would distract the choristers, and how upsetting seeing these sorts of people at the chapel would be for the tourists who have come such a long way.

My son might not be able to talk, but he knows perfectly well what is going on around him. This is not the first time my family has been asked to leave a church on account of his being "too disruptive for other worshipers." This is, however, the first time we have been forced to leave by a member of the clergy. He isn't even ten years old and he knows that he is unwelcome. If only places like Kings College made it clear what kind of spectators were acceptable, my son wouldn't be subjected to rejection, and the other people there, to his unpalatable presence. I have forwarded this letter to the Provost of the College, the Vice Chancellor, the Bishop of Ely, Archbishop Justin Welby, and to the Committee for Ministry of and among Deaf and Disabled People, so that they may advise you on how to better prevent people like my son from attempting to attend chapel in the future. I have also made this letter public, so that others can know what sorts of people you welcome at King's College chapel and will not make the same careless mistake I have.

Respectfully,



Dr Paul B Rimmer
p.brandon.rimmer@gmail.com

CC Prof Michael Proctor, Prof Stephen J Toope, Rt Revd Stephen Conway, Most Revd Justin Welby, CMDDP

What it means to identify as takatāpui today

Hanna McCallum 05:00, Sep 16 2022

<https://www.stuff.co.nz/pou-tiaki/129863564/what-it-means-to-identify-as-takatpui-today>



TOM LEE/STUFF

essa may ranapiri is a takatāpui poet living in Kirikiriroa/Hamilton. For them, the term takatāpui felt like it connected them with their ancestors.

They spent their childhood not having “much of a relationship” with te reo Māori, growing up in a Pākehā household.

Identifying as takatāpui, transgender and non-binary, essa may ranapiri’s experience of learning te reo thus far had been “harrowing”, they said.

Example conversations in class were “blatantly transphobic” and gendered traditions on the marae could mean “sacrificing some things about yourself – maybe just for the hour, but it can be quite hard”.

It wasn’t until a conversation with a lesbian kuia at university that ranapiri (Ngāti Wehi Wehi, Ngāti Raukawa, Te Arawa, Waikato-Tainui, Ngāti Pukeko, Ngāti Takatāpui, Na Guinnich) first came across the term takatāpui.

It “felt like it led me back to my ancestors”, they said.

The term encapsulated both the Māori and queer parts of their identity, leaving nothing behind. “It feels the closest to, in terms of language, representing how I feel I am in the world.”

As a poet, it helped them feel comfortable in their Māoritanga and to play with te reo in their writing.

“Takatāpui felt like the way into my culture in a way that a lot of other things felt a bit alienating.”

Today, the term takatāpui is about an identity that encompasses all the different ways Māori want to express themselves and how they want to identify, Dr Elizabeth Kerekere said.



SUPPLIED

Green Party MP Dr Elizabeth Kerekere has done extensive research into takatāpui identity, identifying as takatāpui herself.

The Green Party MP, rainbow activist and scholar, describes takatāpui as an umbrella term that embraces all Māori with diverse gender identities, sexualities and sex characteristics including whakawāhine, tangata ira tāne, lesbian, gay, bisexual, trans, intersex and queer.

But the term is not new, with written records dating back to the 1830s telling the story of Hinemoa, Tutānekai and his less known lover Tiki. The term was rediscovered in the 1970s by academics Ngahuia Te Awekotuku and Lee Smith, and reclaimed over time.

Navigating Two Tides: Iatua Felagai Taito on his struggles to keep the faith as a queer man

Play Video

RYAN ANDERSON/STUFF

As a child, Iatua Felagai Taito already knew he was different, so he turned to God for answers. (First published March 2022)

Kerekere has also been a part of that process and through extensive research – including her PhD on takatāpui identity and well-being – found evidence of takatāpui being accepted and being a normal part of Māori society, pre-colonisation.

“Part of the way we know that, is when the colonisers and missionaries came here, they were very upset about it and they wrote about it,” Kerekere said.



MELODY THOMAS/SUPPLIED

Writer and activist Kahu Kutia says identifying as takatāpui has in itself been part of the work to decolonise her identity.

Though historically, takatāpui was described as an intimate partner of the same sex, not as a label for an identity, Kerekere says the reclaiming of the word and pulling it from the past, was a way to honour their ancestors and “all the different ways they loved and lived”.

“We lost a lot of knowledge about our culture - not by accident but because it was forced on us.

“Being able to reclaim a word like that ... it's a powerful thing. It says this is the type of Māori that I am and it brings with it, all our culture, all our spirituality, and the power that comes from having the support of your ancestors – it's everything.”

Kahu Kutia, a writer and activist based in Te Whanganui-a-Tara (Wellington), always saw queerness as a Pākehā construct and identifying as takatāpui had become part of decolonising her identity.

Kutia said she found herself often feeling uncomfortable as Māori in mainstream queer spaces and struggled to articulate herself “within the realm of being queer and Māori”.



ROBERT KITCHIN/STUFF

Kerekere says takatāpui holds a broad space in its meaning and the term is about an identity that encompasses all the different ways that Māori want to express themselves and how they want to identify.

Identifying as takatāpui and bringing te ao Māori and tikanga to mainstream queer spaces allowed them “to make sense for us a little more”, she said.

Kutia felt safe and connected to the term that was brought from the past to the present by her elders and that resonated with the way Māori identified through their whakapapa.

”There’s a lot of Māori who don’t yet see spaces for queerness within te ao Māori ... that just means that decolonising and reinvigorating our ways of being Māori are going to take a while,” she said.

“I think the label of takatāpui tanga in itself and bringing queer histories and Māori histories together is in itself decolonial work.”

Not every Māori in the rainbow community identified with the term and Kerekere hoped to meet with language experts to come up with traditional-based words for other identities such as non-binary and intersex.

“We want to support people having the right language that describes who they are and what they associate with,” Kerekere said.



TOM LEE/STUFF

ranapiri says they still make sacrifices to be a part of Māori spaces.

“The development of te reo Māori is critical to us being able to define ourselves increasingly as Māori, to be able to think in our language, to be able to think inside our concepts and having keywords that help us come into a different world, it’s always going to be transformative.”

For ranapiri, takatāpui says: “We were here, and we are still here.”

In spite of the challenges that still existed, the term was the closest word to representing how they felt they were in the world.

“Words can seem so small but when you find the right ones, it’s a really significant thing I think,” they said.

“It can be the difference between fumbling around lost and actually the word can be the light that you’re guided by.”

Other - we choose how we will deal with a person who is different to us

“Different” means that WE see the other person as having a different identity to Ourselves.

In extreme cases, we may choose to see the other person as “OTHER”. (This might lead on to genocide?)

But what is **our** Identity?

UK Windrush Scandal – moving between multiple identities for advantage

- moving between multiple identities for advantage

The UK Windrush scandal illustrates a child of immigrants to UK taking passive and active roles in abusing fellow immigrants and children of immigrants, for their own personal political gain. In essence, they abandoned their cultural historic identity, for the advantages of being part of the advantaged political classes.

Background

https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Windrush_scandal



HMT *Empire Windrush* after which the *Windrush generation* is named.

The *British Nationality Act 1948* gave *citizen of the United Kingdom and Colonies* status and the right of settlement in the UK to everyone who was at that time a British subject by virtue of having been born in a *British colony*.^[15] The act and encouragement from British government campaigns in *Caribbean* countries led to a wave of immigration. Between 1948 and 1970, nearly half a million people moved from the Caribbean to Britain, which in 1948 faced severe labour shortages in the wake of the *Second World War*. Those who came to the UK around this time were later referred to as "the *Windrush generation*".^[4] Working age adults and many children travelled from the Caribbean to join parents or grandparents in the UK or travelled with their parents without their own passports.^[16]

Having a legal right to come to the UK, they neither needed nor were given any documents upon entry to the UK, nor following changes in immigration laws in the early 1970s.^[17] Many worked or attended schools in the UK without any official documentary record of their having done so, other than the same records as any UK-born citizen.^[18]

Many of the countries from which the migrants had come became independent of the UK after 1948, and people living in the UK legally became citizens of the countries they resided in. *Legislative measures* in the 1960s and early 1970s limited the rights of citizens of these former colonies, now members of the *Commonwealth*, to come to or work in the UK. Anyone who had arrived in the UK from a Commonwealth country before 1973 was granted an automatic right permanently to remain, unless they left the UK for more than two years.^{[4][17]} Since the right was automatic, many people in this category were never given, or asked to provide, documentary evidence of their right to remain at the time or over the next forty years, during which, many continued to live and work in the UK, believing themselves to be British.^{[4][18]}

The *Immigration and Asylum Act 1999* specifically protected long-standing residents of the UK from Commonwealth countries from enforced removal. This provision was not transferred to *2014 immigration legislation* because Commonwealth citizens living in the UK before 1 January 1973 were "adequately protected from removal", according to a *Home Office* spokesperson.^[19]



Sajid Javid

https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Sajid_Javid



The Right Honourable Kwasi Kwarteng MP Chancellor of the Exchequer

https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Kwasi_Kwarteng



Priti Patel

https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Priti_Patel

https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Windrush_scandal

Hostile environment policy

In 2012, Home Secretary Theresa May introduced the hostile environment policy

Main article: [Home Office hostile environment policy](#)

The [hostile environment policy](#), which came into effect in October 2012, comprises administrative and legislative measures to make staying in the [United Kingdom](#) as difficult as possible for people without [leave to remain](#) in the hope that they may "[voluntarily leave](#)".^{[20][21][22][23]} In 2012, [Home Secretary Theresa May](#) said the aim was to create "a really hostile environment for illegal immigrants".^[21] The policy was widely seen as part of a strategy of reducing UK immigration to the levels promised in the 2010 [Conservative Party](#) Election Manifesto.^{[21][24][25]} It introduced measures including a legal requirement for landlords, employers, the [NHS](#), charities, community

interest companies and banks to carry out ID checks and to refuse services to individuals unable to prove legal residence in the UK.^{[26][27][28][29][30][31][32][33]} Landlords, employers and others are liable to fines of up to £10,000 if they fail to comply with these measures.^{[7][34]}

The policy led to a more complicated application process for "leave to remain" and encouraged voluntary deportation.^{[35][36]} The policy coincided with sharp increases in Home Office fees for processing "leave to remain", [naturalisation](#) and registration of citizenship applications.^{[37][38]} The BBC reported that the Home Office had made a profit of more than £800m from nationality services between 2011 and 2017.^[38]

The term 'hostile environment' had first been used under the [Brown Government](#).^[39] On 25 April 2018, in answer to questions in Parliament during the Windrush scandal, then Prime Minister Theresa May said the hostile-environment policy would remain government policy.^[40]

In June 2020, Britain's [human rights](#) watchdog, the [Equality and Human Rights Commission](#) (EHRC) launched a legal action to review the "hostile environment" immigration policy and to assess whether the Home Office had complied with its equality duties (as outlined in the [Equality Act 2010](#)). The EHRC planned to develop recommendations by September 2020.^[41] In November 2020, the EHRC said that the Home Office had broken the law by failing to obey public-sector equality duties by not considering how its policies affected black members of the Windrush generation.^[42]

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National Audit Office report

In a report published in December 2018, the UK's [National Audit Office](#) found that the Home Office "failed to protect [the] rights to live, work and access services" of the Windrush scandal victims, had ignored warnings of the impending scandal, which had been raised up to four years earlier, and had still not adequately addressed the scandal.

Resumption of deportations

Public outcry against the deportations caused them to be paused in 2018. However, in February 2019 it emerged that the Home Office intended to resume deportations.^[111] The news led to renewed outcries against the Home Office.

On 5 February 2019, Javid claimed that all of the people due to be deported were guilty of "very serious crimes ... like rape and murder, firearms offences and drug-trafficking", but the claim was rebutted by the Home Office and was criticised by commentators as inaccurate and potentially detrimental to the futures of the deportees.^{[116][117]}

On 21 February 2019, the Jamaican High Commissioner to the UK called for a halt to deportations to Jamaica until the Home Office has published its investigation into the Windrush scandal.

Redress for victims ??????????????

Amber Rudd, while still Home Secretary, apologised for the "appalling" treatment of the Windrush generation.^[119] On 23 April 2018, Rudd announced that compensation would be given to those affected and fees and language tests for citizenship applicants would be waived for this group in the future.^[76] Theresa May also apologised for the "anxiety caused" at a meeting with twelve Caribbean leaders, though she was unable to tell them "definitively" whether anyone had been wrongly deported.^[120] May also promised that those affected would no longer need to rely on providing formal documents to prove their history of residency in the UK, nor would they incur costs in getting necessary papers.^[121]

On 24 May Sajid Javid, the new Home Secretary, outlined a series of measures to process citizenship applications for people affected by the scandal. The measures included free citizenship applications for children who joined their parents in the UK when they were under 18 and for children born in the UK of Windrush parents, and free confirmation of right to remain for those entitled to it but currently outside the UK, subject to normal good character requirements. The measures were criticised by MPs, as they provided no right of appeal or review of decisions. Yvette Cooper, chair of the Commons Home Affairs Committee, said: "Given the history of this, how can anyone trust Home Office not to make further mistakes? If the Home Secretary is confident that senior caseworkers will be making good decisions in Windrush cases, he has nothing to fear about appeals and reviews." Javid also said that a Home Office team had identified 500 potential cases thus far.^[122]

In subsequent weeks, Javid also promised to provide figures on how many people had been wrongly detained and indicated that he did not believe in quantified targets for removals.^[78]

On 21 May 2018, it was reported that many Windrush victims were still destitute, sleeping rough or on the sofas of friends and relatives while waiting for Home Office action. Many could not afford to travel to Home Office appointments if they got them. David Lammy MP described it as "yet another failure in a litany of abject failures that Windrush citizens are being left homeless and hungry on the streets."^[123] In late May and early June, there were calls from MPs for a hardship fund to be set up to meet urgent needs.^{[123][124]} By late June, it was reported that the government's two-week deadline for resolving cases has been repeatedly breached, and that many of the most serious cases still had not been addressed. Jamaican High Commissioner Seth George Ramocan said: "There has been an effort to correct the situation now that it has become so very open and public."^[66]

In August 2018 a compensation plan had still not been implemented. Examples cited included, a man who was still homeless while waiting for a decision; a former NHS nurse, Sharon, who told a caseworker, "I am not allowed to work, I have no benefits. I have a 12-year-old child." The caseworker replied, "Well I'm afraid these are the immigration rules,... but obviously the Home Office point of view [is] if you don't have a legal status in the UK you're not entitled to work or study." Satbir Singh of the Joint Council for the Welfare of Immigrants stated, "It's appalling that the Home Office effectively told Sharon to go and beg for food, when there are laws requiring the state to act in the best interests of children, and provide financial support to children facing destitution." Also in August 2018, a caseworker for David Lammy, said: "We have referred 25 constituents to the Windrush taskforce in total. Only three have been granted their citizenship so far, and the others are left in a strange limbo ... We still have some people who have not even got biometric residence permits and we alerted the Home Office to these people months ago."^[125]

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/windrush-lessons-learned-review>

[https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Sitting_in_Limbo_\(2020_film\)](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Sitting_in_Limbo_(2020_film))

The quality of human rights should be judged by actions, not words, by how the most vulnerable people are treated.

Infants prefer individuals who punish those not like themselves, Yale researchers find

By Bill Hathaway
march 12, 2013

<https://news.yale.edu/2013/03/12/infants-prefer-individuals-who-punish-those-not-themselves-yale-researchers-find>



Infants as young as nine months old prefer individuals who punish those who are not like them, and this seemingly innate mean streak grows stronger in the next five months of life, a study by researchers at Yale University has found.

Babies, like adults, prefer individuals who like the same things they do. A new study reports that they want individuals who share their tastes to be treated well by others, but want those whose tastes differ from their own to be treated badly. The study of 200 nine- and 14-month-old infants was published in *Psychological Science*, a journal of the Association for Psychological Science.

Psychologists have long known that people tend to like others who are like themselves. Social bonds form more easily among those who look the same, act the same, have the same interests, and are members of the same group. We

deem people who are like ourselves to be more just, intelligent, and trustworthy, while we attribute negative qualities to those who are different from us.

But when do these attitudes arise?

In recent years, Yale's [Karen Wynn](#), professor of psychology and cognitive science, has shown that even before their first birthday, infants too prefer individuals who share their own tastes in food or clothes. Wynn's research team introduced babies to two hand puppets that had expressed contrasting preferences (for example, one preferring green beans to graham crackers, the other preferring the crackers to the beans). Babies who themselves preferred the crackers were much more likely to reach for puppets that liked crackers.

Wynn and lead author, Kiley Hamlin, now of the University of British Columbia, wanted to know if infants' preference for similar individuals meant that they hold negative attitudes toward those who are unlike themselves. In the new study, the researchers introduced babies to a puppet with the same food preference as the baby and to a puppet with the opposite preference. They then introduced two *new* puppets: One was helpful and retrieved a dropped rubber ball. The other was mean and took the ball away.

As expected babies of both ages preferred the helper over the meanies when the puppet being assisted liked the same food they did. But the next finding surprised the researchers: When the puppet that dropped the ball did not share the babies' taste in food, the infants preferred the mean puppet to the helper. In other words: Babies prefer someone who is nice to an individual similar to themselves, but they also prefer someone who is mean to a dissimilar individual.

However, Wynn, said, the results do not necessarily show that babies are born with a mean streak.

"We were surprised — and more than a little chagrined — to find that babies actively prefer individuals who mistreat someone whose tastes differ from theirs," Wynn said. "But while our findings show that we may be built to dislike differences, we are also built to like similarities — and humans all around the world are similar in a multitude of ways."

It may be that the more similarities babies — and adults — recognize between themselves and others, the less they will want to see those others harmed, said Wynn. When no other information is given, babies appear to dislike someone who differs from them. Their attitude might change if they had more information, she said.

"We don't want to be too quick to generalize. My husband hates cheese, and I love cheese, and we get along just fine," Wynn said. "The interesting question to me is what kinds of information allow us to transcend superficial differences and

build on our commonalities.” Additional authors on the study are Neha Mahajan, and Zoe Liberman. The research was supported by the National Science Foundation and the National Institutes of Health.

Karen Wynn

https://psychology.fandom.com/wiki/Karen_Wynn

Karen Wynn (born Dec 18, 1962) is a Canadian and American Professor of [Psychology](#) and [Cognitive Science](#) at [Yale University](#).^[1] She was born in Austin, Texas and grew up on the Canadian prairies in Regina, Saskatchewan. Her research explores the cognitive capacities of infants and young children. She directs the [Infant Cognition Laboratory](#) in the Psychology Department at Yale University.

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Research

Karen Wynn is known for her pioneering work on infants' and children's early [numerical cognition](#). Some of her most influential research on this topic, published in the scientific journal [Nature](#) in 1992, reported that 5-month-old human infants are able to compute the outcomes of simple addition and subtraction operations on small sets of physical objects. "Psychologists were stunned when Wynn announced her results, and many skeptical researchers around the world devised variants of her procedure to determine whether her conclusions were correct."¹ Wynn's findings were subsequently replicated by independent researchers in the United States and in Europe on human infants^{[5][6]} and later extended to other subject populations, including rhesus monkeys and domesticated dogs who, like human babies, distinguished correct from incorrect outcomes of additions and subtractions of objects (eggplants, in the studies with rhesus monkeys; doggie biscuits, in the studies with dogs).

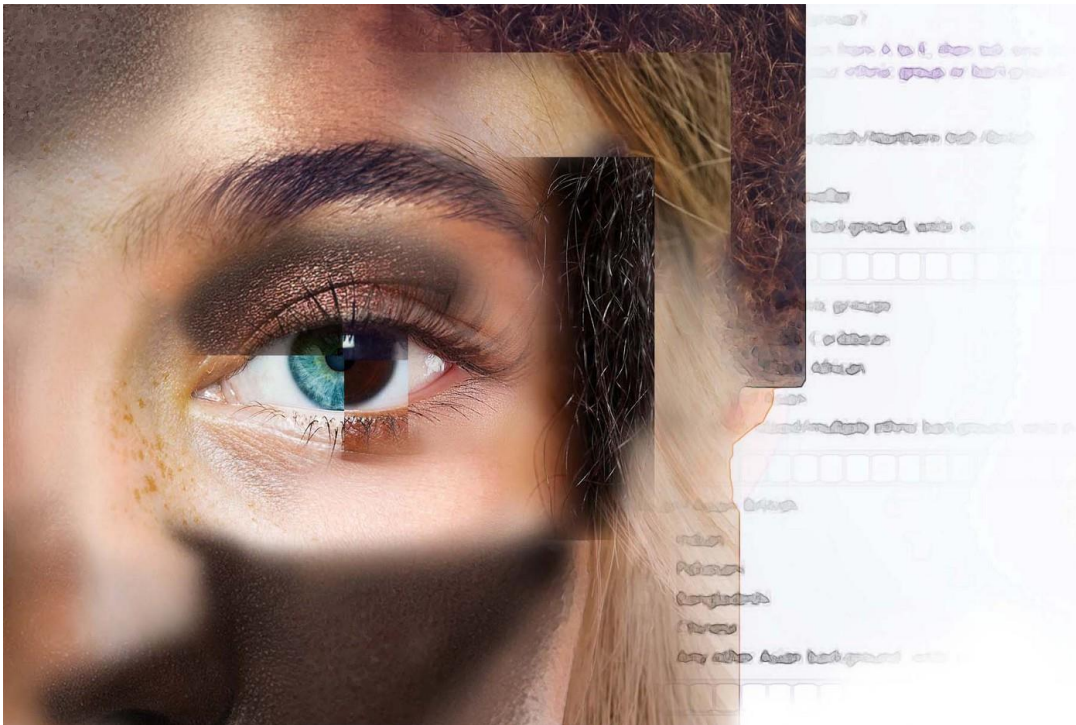
Wynn has suggested that humans, along with many other animal species, are innately endowed with cognitive machinery for detecting and reasoning about numbers of items.

Wynn has also investigated humans' early social preferences and judgments. Some of this research, conducted with collaborators [Paul Bloom](#) and J. Kiley Hamlin, found that 6- and 10-month-old infants distinguish helpful from unhelpful characters in simple interactions enacted by hand puppets, and prefer the helping characters to the hinderers.

Notable philosopher of bioethics [Peter Singer](#) wrote of these studies that they “have upset the previous wisdom, associated with such stellar figures in psychology as [Sigmund Freud](#), [Jean Piaget](#), and [Lawrence Kohlberg](#), that human moral development is the product of our rearing and our culture.”

Wynn and her colleagues have suggested that babies' tendency to prefer prosocial individuals may arise from an adaptive capacity to detect good candidate partners for reciprocal interactions, and to distinguish such individuals from, and prefer them to, those who may be more likely to act in self-interest or to renege on implied social contracts.

<https://medium.com/the-fledger/modern-multiculturalism-we-can-no-longer-confine-ourselves-to-a-single-identity-c6916257b26b>



I tend to avoid falling into categories that limit the individual. But what if you are asked on an official form to tick the box that defines your ethnicity? When I had the vaccine, I was asked to specify my ethnicity five minutes before my shot on one of these forms. As I was reading the list of categories I could subscribe to, White, Black, Black and White, Black and White Caribbean, Mixed, Mixed other; I couldn't help but feel that kind of undefinition that has paradoxically defined me all my life. I was born in Paraguay to a Venezuelan mother and a Spanish father. My brother was born in Brazil. I was two when we moved to Valencia, five when I landed in Antigua, eight by the time we arrived in Sofia,

from there we moved to Bogotá and by the time I was thirteen, I was living in Caracas. I spent my teens in Asunción and my twenties in Madrid, where I have lived the longest. I was schooled in the French educational system, and my second language is English. That's my mix. So, I'm not quite sure where I fit in. Usually, I just put whatever seems easier. But what if, by doing that, I am allowing others to define me? Do we have to keep answering these questionnaires as if there were no other options? As if the reality in which we live were not broader and more complex? Do we have to keep putting ourselves into categories that do not reflect our reality? What if you have, like me, a multicultural identity?

Technically, I am white because of my skin colour, but my ethnic background is much broader. And although I don't seem mixed and have identified myself as white all my life, with all the privileges that being white entails, I am a white Latina. Because as white as my father is, my mother was mixed, my grandfather was black (born of a white mother and a black father), and my grandmother was mixed (from a white father and an indigenous mother). So, even if I pass as white, which I do, I cannot insert myself into this category without setting aside a part of my ancestry and the culture that I have inherited.

A whiteness that, by the way, varies from continent to continent. In South America, I am perceived as white European, which is the closest thing to a light-eyed blonde, the holy grail in terms of status. But as soon as I cross the Atlantic and set foot in Spain, my whiteness darkens, and I become a little more Latin than European. Part of me is also black, the corresponding percentage of my great-grandfather's line in Venezuela. But what counts as black? If by black we mean skin colour, I am not black; I am white with all the spectrum of colours that comes with being a white Latina. If by black we also understand having black ancestors among your family members, then I'm a little bit black. And if by black we mean cultural heritage, I am Venezuelan Caribbean.

So, am I black and white Caribbean? Not entirely, because that would exclude my indigenous ancestors who come from my maternal grandmother's side.

Then, "Mixed other"? Definitely mixed, but *other*? As opposed to what? Pure? Aren't we all a bit mixed? "Mixed other" implies that if I choose to include all who I belong to, I automatically fall into the box of *other*. And if I should not specify my ancestry, I am limited to a category that does not define me.

For as long as I can remember, I have tried to answer questions such as "where do you come from?" by synthesising *ad infinitum* the same litany of "half Spanish, half Venezuelan", trying not to cast any ancestor out. "But do you feel more this or that?" would fall a little further down the line, to which I often used to respond by submitting myself to the violence of narrowing your identity down to their need of fitting you in a box so they would feel more comfortable around you.

What does it mean to be in the category of *other*? It means that you are from elsewhere, that you are different, that you are a foreigner. Not only does it evoke the exotic (and wild?), it emphasises distance. *Other* is a word that creates separation, making it difficult to feel a sense of belonging.

No matter how much you integrate into a collective, people's gaze upon you is also significant. It is a bidirectional force. I carry my family lineage and all the stereotypes attached to every one of my nationalities or cultural heritages. As *other*, you become, whether you want to or not, the representative of all the collectives to which you may be connected. To have a multicultural identity can feel like having your body as a battleground between cultural clashes. In terms of political representation, it makes you invisible. *Other* becomes a distant, scarcely understood group that seems to live on the fringes of defined and dominant categories. Suppose a group wants to participate in political decision-

making and claim its existence as multicultural and not as an undefined other that remains somewhat on the sidelines. In that case, it needs to be recognised and gain strength within the social structure.

Things have been changing since I was a child. In this increasingly globalised and intercultural world, there is a pressing need to understand the multicultural reality. More and more people are mixed. They are far more interested in exploring their own identity and somewhat less willing to stick to a single category. The experience of who we are as individuals, and how we live, can no longer be confined to one single box. While categories can help us understand and give voice to a collective experience, they shouldn't limit us and encapsulate us within them such that we believe in identifying solely with those in that box with us, recreating the eternal and frankly boring dichotomy of us-versus-them. Moreover, it is a fiction no identity is static, nor can it be pinned down to a cultural, racial, political, or religious category. You name it. Even the most homogeneous group is multi-layered. And if it is not, it is probably a cult.

Since I grew up travelling, I've internalised more than one culture and now identify with cultural pluralism. Having a multicultural identity is not only about being exposed to other cultures, but it also entails that you have a connection to those cultures, that your allegiance does not reside in just one place and that your family lives in many areas. It means that in the process of adaptation, you acquire a certain fluidity that enables you to grasp and adapt to others' gaze more easily, like a colourful chameleon that switches accents, tonalities, and language according to the context. But it can also involve dealing with a lack of belonging. Whether you have moved from one country to another and in the process of acculturation have internalised other cultures, or because you were born into a multicultural family, belonging to multiple places and cultures can be a challenge. This is especially the case when the general sense of belonging is limited to one category, and implicit or explicit messages suggest

that you are not enough of one culture or another. Or even when you feel attacked or discriminated against for being the infamous *other*. Imagine living all of your life in the same city and being seen as the *other* because you come from a multicultural family even though you speak the same language, eat in the same restaurants, and build your life around the same streets as everyone else. Being accepted implies the freedom to live fully with your diversity and multiple alliances without it impeding your sense of belonging to the community you live in; We are not only a story that we inherit, but we are also a creative process.

So how do we give coherence to our identity when society asks us to compartmentalise our identity? How do we respond to these forms?

On my last trip to South America, it became crystal clear that I would never feel integrated if I constantly felt compelled to define myself in the most comfortable way for others. That it was no longer about being Spanish, Venezuelan, or Paraguayan like everyone else, but about being Spanish, Venezuelan, and Paraguayan with all my mixtures. This cultural unification has been gradually occurring since I decided that I didn't have to be a particular way to belong, that I could be connected to all my parts without getting lost in the process. We can accept to have a devalued identity, or we can own our differences by showing ourselves. By acknowledging your multicultural identity, you're embracing your stories and the plurality that exists in each singularity. The most vibrant places consist of people who weave worlds together within a single city, creating new stories that reframe our individual and group identities.

So, which box did I tick at the end, you may be wondering. "Mixed other", while specifying all my cultural identities; stepping out of my comfort zone by reflecting an increasingly common reality in the hope that instead of

considering multiculturalism as something different and distant, perhaps we can see it as a bridge to more synergistic societies.

Written by [Maite Oxford](#).

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[Elizabeth Kasprzyk](#)

Oct 10, 2021

<https://ekasprzyk.medium.com/the-problem-of-strong-female-characters-33f1b50f659a>

5 min read

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In my group of friends, pretty much everyone likes strong female characters, but outside of that group, the term can be a bit of a turn off for certain segments of the population. The term can also become political in some areas, signalling whether you are “woke” or “liberal”, or whether you oppose these labels with all your might.

I love strong female characters too. It’s a lot of fun to watch women whacking the crap out of men. But I also notice that, unlike some of my friends, I hit a limit and then I’ve had enough, and getting any more or a dose leaves me feeling less great about myself.

To me, this isn’t really surprising. The transgender theory of Intrinsic Inclinations explains it quite nicely, and it’s something I use every day in my thinking. So, given all of this, and the fact that I’ve talked about it incessantly with my friends, I thought that pretty much no one would mind me saying “I don’t really want to watch anything with a strong female character right now”.

What I didn’t expect was to end up on the wrong side of the political argument, and in ending up there, I realised there was an article in this topic, which is a bit more fascinating than it looks.

Gender vs Gender

So, for those who don't know a lot about the Intrinsic Inclinations model, it basically states that all the stuff that affects sexual orientation and your internal gender is wired into your brain in a certain way.

A detail that really doesn't get enough airtime is that there's a separation between two things that make up your gender: your internal sex, and your internal gender social role.

For me, that's a daily reality as I grew up in the society of people whose internal gender role would not match what you think it would be by looking at them. A lot of these people are still my friends.

However, it turns out I really belonged in the group of people whose internal sex does not match what they were born with, what most people would call transgender people.

This split is where things get interesting.

What we look for in Strong Female Characters

When we're looking at a strong female characters, frequently, but not always, they're generally doing the kind of things that men do, taking charge, taking names and that kind of thing.

For my friends whose social gender roles are not the ones you'd expect, this is normal. Taking charge and sometimes, taking names, is what they do in a more realistic sense, some of them in their day jobs, whether it's medicine or botany.

For someone like me, whose internal social gender role matches the sex I am now, and for many countless girls who actually grew up as girls and are more feminine, strong, powerful women are exceptional and inspirational, an example that, even if life were to go wrong, success could still be had through other means, or that the boundaries that others put on us can be pushed through if we need to.

These two contrasting messages are very different, and what the two groups can take away from a strong female protagonist can be very different.

What is written

Beyond what we take out of the strong female protagonist, however, there is also what the writer strictly puts there that can signal that the character herself has intrinsic inclinations of her own that makes her one or the other type, regardless how the reader wants to read the character.

I love science fiction, and at the moment there's a lot of great novels written featuring characters involving characters whose internal gender roles are explicitly different, along with lots of non-binary entities too (Ann Leckie's sentient ship should get a particular shout-out here).

But I am neither non-binary nor is my gender role exceptional any more. Drinking down these kinds of stories is like heterosexual people reading homosexual love stories — there's an intellectual engagement, but not a visceral one.

I know that, no matter how hard I try, my social gender role is hard-coded, and nothing I do will change it, so reading those books and watching these types of

series is a lot like watching men do manly stuff — it's great and entertaining, but it does not speak to me. What these people do is unachievable and impossible for me in daily life.

On the flipside, as a more feminine woman who can't and won't have any children, watching women struggle in situations where most women would break is something that is both achievable, inspiring and matches my day to day life. The protagonist of N.K. Jemisin's Broken Earth trilogy seems to fit into this mould.

Reactions

Men also have opinions on such stories, and female characters are also written for them, and the attractiveness of female characters is directly related to their own intrinsic inclinations.

A man whose own social gender role doesn't match the one you'd expect is very likely to enjoy and be fascinated with strong female protagonists who are also of different social gender.

However, for the men that aren't, such characters might be intriguing and interesting, but they're not really going to be attractive on a visceral level.

It's this lack of enjoyment or connection that can lead to the backlashes against more female role models in usually male playspaces (e.g. video games) that we sometimes see, and is probably what has led to strong female characters becoming a proxy for the political situation around tolerance of people whose social gender isn't the usual.

The F-word

All of this leads back to my original issue, which started this article, of accidentally ending up on the wrong side of this debate.

It feels like there's a pre-feminist phase, where all women were required to behave as if their social gender role intrinsic inclination was feminine regardless, of what it actually was.

Feminists rose to fight back and create a space for the women whose social gender roles were different where they could just be and find the role-models they so frequently lacked.

Now there's a post-feminist fringe of people like me, who take an even more complex and nuanced view, and sometimes we can get lumped in with the pre-feminists.

If there's one flaw I sometimes observe in those of my friends whose social gender is not the usual, it's this belief that all women can be like that. Not only could be like that, but they would be like that, if they just tried hard enough, or threw off the shackles of patriarchy. And therefore, it's the belief that their strong female characters should be for us too, regardless of whether they really are.

Other (philosophy)

This Wikipedia article is quite long, for very good reason - it is subtle and very important socially. I recommend reading the full article, when you already have a basic understanding from observations in the world around you.

[https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Other_\(philosophy\)](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Other_(philosophy))

In [phenomenology](#), the terms **the Other** and **the Constitutive Other** identify the other human being, in their differences from the [Self](#), as being a cumulative, constituting factor in the [self-image](#) of a person; as acknowledgement of [being real](#); hence, the Other is dissimilar to and the opposite of the Self, of Us, and of the Same.^{[1][2]} The Constitutive Other is the relation between the [personality](#) (essential nature) and the person (body) of a human being; the relation of [essential](#) and superficial characteristics of [personal identity](#) that corresponds to the relationship between opposite, but correlative, characteristics of the Self, because the difference is inner-difference, within the Self.^{[3][4]}

The condition and quality of **Otherness** (the characteristics of the Other) is the state of being different from and alien to the [social identity](#) of a person and to the [identity of the Self](#).^[5] In the [discourse](#) of philosophy, the term Otherness identifies and refers to the characteristics of *Who?* and *What?* of the Other, which are distinct and separate from [the Symbolic](#) order of things; from [the Real](#) (the authentic and unchangeable); from the [aesthetic](#) (art, beauty, taste); from [political philosophy](#); from [social norms](#) and [social identity](#); and from the [Self](#). Therefore, the condition of Otherness is a person's non-conformity to and with the social norms of society; and Otherness is the condition of [disenfranchisement](#) (political exclusion), effected either by the [State](#) or by the social institutions (e.g., the [professions](#)) invested with the corresponding socio-political [power](#). Therefore, the imposition of Otherness [alienates](#) the person labelled as "the Other" from the centre of society, and places him or her at the margins of society, for being the Other.^[6]

The term **Othering** describes the reductive action of labelling and defining a person as a [subaltern native](#), as someone who belongs to the socially subordinate category of the Other. The practice of Othering excludes persons who do not fit the norm of the [social group](#), which is a version of the Self;^[7] likewise, in [human geography](#), the practice of othering persons means to exclude and displace them from the social group to the margins of society, where mainstream social norms do not apply to them, for being the Other.^[8]

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Psychology

The psychoanalyst [Jacques Lacan](#) (1901–1981) and the philosopher of ethics [Emmanuel Levinas](#) (1906–1995) established the contemporary definitions, usages, and applications of the constitutive Other, as the radical counterpart of the Self. Lacan associated the Other with language and with [the symbolic order](#) of things. Levinas associated the Other with the ethical metaphysics of [scripture](#) and [tradition](#); the ethical proposition is that the Other is superior and prior to the Self.

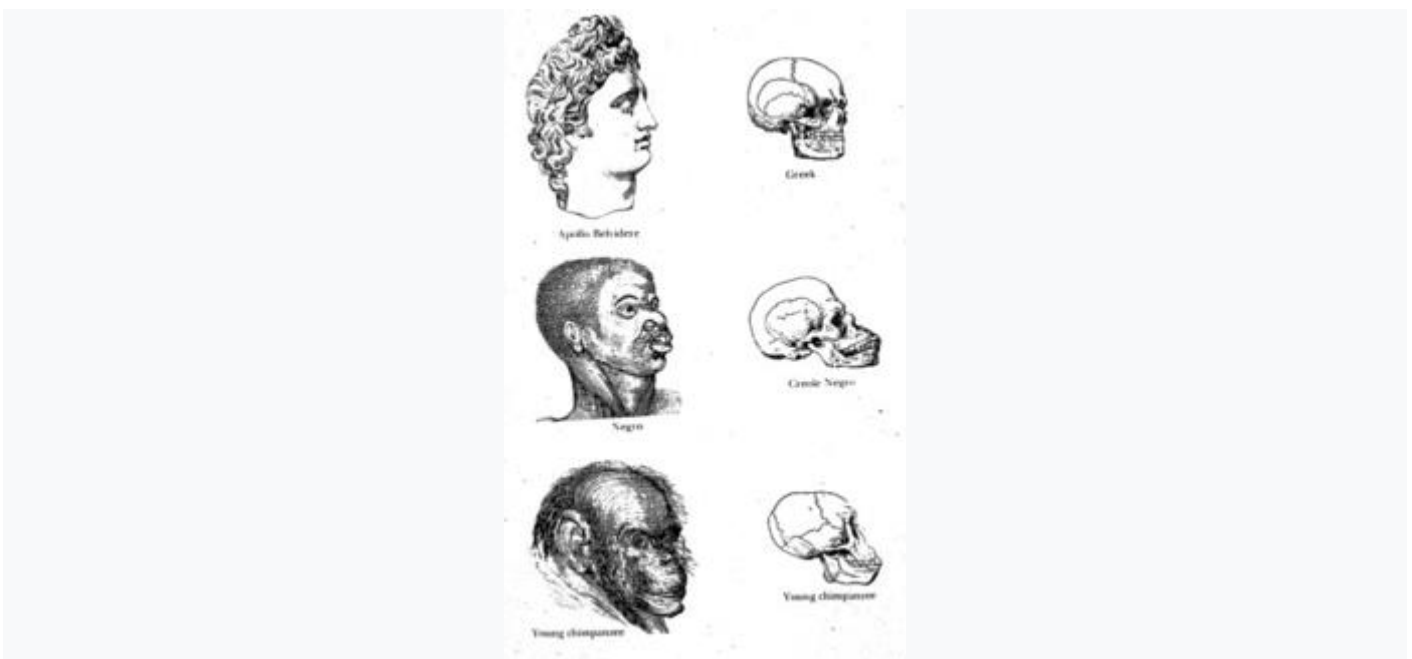
In the event, Levinas re-formulated the [face-to-face](#) encounter (wherein a person is morally responsible to the Other person) to include the propositions of [Jacques Derrida](#) (1930–2004) about the impossibility of the Other (person) being an entirely [metaphysical pure-presence](#). That the Other could be an entity of pure Otherness (of [alterity](#)) personified in a [representation](#) created and depicted with language that identifies, describes, and classifies. The conceptual re-formulation of the nature of the Other also included Levinas's analysis of the distinction between "[the saying and the said](#)"; nonetheless, the nature of the Other retained the priority of [ethics](#) over [metaphysics](#).

In the psychology of the mind (e.g. [R. D. Laing](#)), the Other identifies and refers to [the unconscious mind](#), to [silence](#), to [insanity](#), and to language ("to what is referred and to what is unsaid").^[12] Nonetheless, in such psychologic and analytic usages, there might arise a tendency to [relativism](#) if the Other person (as a being of pure, abstract alterity) leads to ignoring the commonality of [truth](#). Likewise, problems arise from unethical usages of the terms The Other, Otherness, and Othering to reinforce [ontological divisions](#) of reality: of [being](#), of [becoming](#), and of [existence](#).^[1]

Imperialism and colonialism

The contemporary, [post-colonial](#) world system of nation-states (with interdependent politics and economies) was preceded by the European [imperial system](#) of economic and settler [colonies](#) in which "the creation and maintenance of an unequal economic, cultural, and territorial relationship, usually between states, and often in the form of an empire, [was] based on [domination](#) and [subordination](#)."^[17] In the imperialist world system, political and economic affairs were fragmented, and the discrete empires "provided for most of their own needs ... [and disseminated] their influence solely through conquest [empire] or the threat of conquest [hegemony]."^[18]

Racism



A manifestation of the Other in the form of [scientific racism](#): In this 1857 illustration from his work *Indigenous Races of the Earth*, anthropologist [Josiah C. Nott](#) justified anti-Black racism by claiming that the features of African-Americans had more in common with [chimpanzees](#) than humans in comparison to white people.

The racist perspective of the [Western world](#) during the 18th and 19th centuries was invented with the Othering of non-white peoples, which also was supported with the fabrications of [scientific racism](#), such as the pseudo-science of [phrenology](#), which claimed that, in relation to a white-man's head, the head-size of the non-European Other indicated inferior intelligence; e.g. the [apartheid-era](#) cultural representations of [coloured people](#) in [South Africa](#) (1948–94).^[19]

Consequent to [the Holocaust](#) (1941–1945), with documents such as [The Race Question](#) (1950) and the [Declaration on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination](#) (1963), the United Nations officially declared that racial differences are insignificant to anthropological likeness among human beings. Despite the UN's factual dismissal of [racialism](#), institutional Othering continues in [US government](#) forms that ask citizen to identify and to place themselves into a [racial category](#);^[19] thus, institutional Othering produces the cultural misrepresentation of political refugees as *illegal immigrants* (from overseas) and of immigrants as *illegal aliens* (usually from México).

Orientalism

To European peoples, imperialism (military conquest of non-white peoples, annexation, and economic integration of their countries to the motherland) was intellectually justified by (among other reasons) [orientalism](#), the study and [fetishization](#) of the [Eastern world](#) as "primitive peoples" requiring modernisation the [civilising mission](#). Colonial empires were justified and realised with essentialist and reductive [representations](#) (of people, places and cultures) in books and pictures and fashion, which conflated different cultures and peoples into the binary relation of [The Orient](#) and [The Occident](#). Orientalism created the [artificial existence](#) of the Western Self and the non-western Other.^[20] Orientalists rationalised the cultural artifice of a difference of [essence](#) between white and non-white peoples to fetishize (identify, classify, subordinate) the peoples and cultures of Asia into "the Oriental Other" — who exists *in opposition to* the Western Self.^[21] As a function of imperial ideology, [Orientalism](#) fetishizes people and things in three actions of [cultural imperialism](#): (i) Homogenization (all Oriental peoples are one folk); (ii) Feminization (the Oriental always is subordinate in the East–West relation); and (iii) Essentialization (a people possess universal characteristics); thus established by Othering, the empire's [cultural hegemony](#) reduces to inferiority the people, places, and things of the Eastern world, as measured against the West, the standard of superior civilisation.^{[21][22]}

The subaltern native

[https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Subaltern_\(postcolonialism\)](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Subaltern_(postcolonialism))



The *subaltern native* is a colonial identity for the Other, which conceptually derives from the [Cultural hegemony](#) work of [Antonio Gramsci](#), an Italian Marxist intellectual.

Colonial stability requires the [cultural subordination](#) of the non-white Other for transformation into the [subaltern native](#); a colonised people who facilitate the [exploitation of their labour](#), of their lands, and of the natural resources of their country. The practise of Othering justifies the physical domination and cultural subordination of the native people by degrading them — first from being a national-citizen to being a colonial-subject — and then by displacing them to the periphery of the colony, and of geopolitical enterprise that is imperialism.^[23]

Using the false dichotomy of "colonial strength" (imperial power) against "native weakness" (military, social, and economic), the coloniser invents the non-white Other in an artificial dominator-dominated relationship that can be resolved only through [racialist noblesse oblige](#), the "moral responsibility" that psychologically allows the colonialist Self to believe that imperialism is a [civilising mission](#) to educate, convert, and then culturally assimilate the Other into the empire — thus transforming the "civilised" Other into the Self.^[24]

In establishing a colony, Othering a non-white people allowed the colonisers to physically subdue and "civilise" the natives to establish the [hierarchies of domination](#) (political and social) required for exploiting the subordinated natives and their country.^[25] As a function of empire, a settler colony is an economic means for profitably disposing of two demographic groups: (i) the colonists (surplus population of the motherland) and (ii) the colonised (the subaltern native to be exploited) who antagonistically define and represent the Other as separate and apart from the colonial Self.^{[26][27]}

Othering establishes unequal relationships of power between the colonised natives and the colonisers, who believe themselves [essentially superior](#) to the natives whom they othered into racial inferiority, as the non-white Other.^[28] That dehumanisation maintains the false binary-relations of social class, [caste](#), and [race](#), of sex and gender, and of nation and religion.^[25] The profitable functioning of a colony (economic or settler) requires continual protection of the cultural demarcations that are basic to the unequal [socio-economic relation](#) between the "civilised man" (the colonist) and the "savage man", thus the transformation of the Other into the colonial subaltern.^{[28][27]}

Gender and sex

LGBT identities

The [social exclusion](#) function of Othering a person or a social group from mainstream society to the social margins – for being essentially different from the [societal norm](#) (the plural Self) – is a socio-economic function of gender. In a society wherein man–woman [heterosexuality](#) is the sexual norm, the Other refers to and identifies [lesbians](#) (women who love women) and [gays](#) (men who love men) as people of [same-sex orientation](#) whom society has othered as "sexually deviant" from the norms of binary-gender heterosexuality.^[29] In practise, sexual Othering is realised by applying the negative denotations and connotations of the terms that describe lesbian, gay, [bisexual](#) and [transgender](#) people, in order to diminish their personal social status and [political power](#), and so displace their LGBT communities to the legal margin of society. To neutralise such cultural Othering, LGBT communities *queer* a city by creating social spaces that use the spatial and temporal plans of the city to allow the LGBT communities free expression of their [social identities](#), e.g. a [boystown](#), a [gay-pride parade](#), etc.; as such, *queering* urban spaces is a political means for the non-binary sexual Other to establish themselves as citizens integral to the [reality](#) (cultural and socio-economic) of their city's [body politic](#).^[30]

Woman as identity



The philosopher of existentialism Simone de Beauvoir developed the concept of The Other to explain the workings of the Man–Woman binary gender relation, as a critical base of the Dominator–Dominate relation, which characterises sexual inequality between men and women.

The [philosopher of feminism](#), [Cheshire Calhoun](#) identified the female Other as the female-half of the binary-gender relation that is the Man and Woman relation. The [deconstruction](#) of the word *Woman* (the subordinate party in the Man *and* Woman relation) produced a [conceptual reconstruction](#) of the female Other as the Woman who exists independently of male definition, as [rationalised](#) by patriarchy. That the female Other is a self-aware Woman who is [autonomous](#) and independent of the patriarchy's formal subordination of the female sex with the institutional limitations of [social convention](#), [tradition](#), and [customary law](#); the social subordination of women is communicated (denoted and connoted) in the [sexist usages](#) of the word *Woman*.^[31]

In 1949, the philosopher of [existentialism](#), [Simone de Beauvoir](#) applied [Hegel](#)'s conception of "the Other" (as a constituent part of [Self-awareness](#)) to describe a male-dominated culture that [represents](#) Woman as the sexual Other to Man. In a patriarchal culture, the Man–Woman relation is society's normative binary-gender relation,

wherein *the sexual Other* is a social [minority](#) with the least [socio-political agency](#), usually the women of the community, because patriarchal [semantics](#) established that "a man represents both the positive and the neutral, as indicated by the common use of [the word] *Man* to designate human beings in general; whereas [the word] *Woman* represents only the negative, defined by limiting criteria, without reciprocity" from the first sex, from Man.^[32]

In 1957, [Betty Friedan](#) reported that a woman's social identity is formally established by the sexual politics of the Ordinate–Subordinate nature of the Man–Woman sexual relation, the social norm in the patriarchal West. When queried about their post-graduate lives, the majority of women interviewed at a university-class reunion, used binary gender language, and referred to and identified themselves by their social roles (wife, mother, lover) in the private sphere of life; and did not identify themselves by their own achievements (job, career, business) in the public sphere of life. Unawares, the women had acted [conventionally](#), and automatically identified and referred to themselves as the social Other to men.

Although the nature of the social Other is influenced by the society's social constructs ([social class](#), [sex](#), [gender](#)), as a human organisation, society holds the [socio-political power](#) to formally change the social relation between the male-defined Self and *Woman*, the sexual Other, who is not male.^[33]

In feminist definition, women are the Other to men (but not the Other proposed by Hegel) and are not existentially defined by masculine demands; and also are the social Other who unknowingly accepts social subjugation as part of [subjectivity](#),^[34] because the gender identity of woman is constitutionally different from the gender identity of man. The harm of Othering is in the asymmetric nature of unequal roles in sexual and gender relations; the inequality arises from the social mechanics of [intersubjectivity](#).^[35]

What Burning Women Taught Me About My Dual Identity

Burning women. A tradition that the British abhorred, the Indians exalted, and I had far too many existential crises over.



[Jess](#)

Feb 24

<https://historyofyesterday.com/what-burning-women-taught-me-about-my-dual-identity-a22084504832>

6 min read

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Woman Performing Sati by Thomas Rowlandson (1815)

T

he ritual of Sati in India occurs after a husband dies in which the widow would self-immolate on his pyre. For a History Fair project in college, I focused on the impact of British colonization in India, and as an Indian-American, I found myself stranded in the middle of conflicting opinions.

Maybe I should clarify that history was never my forte. The memorization of facts from centuries ago to regurgitate on tests shaped my perception of history as a very dry subject. Despite these preconceived notions, I wanted to embrace studying the past and found myself signed up to compete in History Fair: Triumph and Tragedy.

Typing away on my laptop, I went over to my best friend, Google, to narrow down a topic. An article I stumbled upon about the Indo-Pakistan border ignited a desire to research the culture that I had grown up in. When I discovered burning women in India's history, the tradition of Sati, I was intrigued.

Researching Sati: a personal story

From that point forth, I spent up to 6 hours a day researching about Sati through every possible lens of how the tradition shaped British-Indian relations. The ritual had existed for centuries in certain villages in India as an interpretation of a Hindu religious text — the Vedas. However, the evangelical influence and Western ideology on British colonizers caused the abolition of Sati in the mid-nineteenth century because it was 'ritual suicide.'

Although seemingly straightforward on paper, my research shaped a tradition that seemed like a perfect recipe for an epic saga: religious roots, a love stronger than death, narcotics, savages, ulterior motives, and a dose of political tension to spice things up.

Numerous nuances in how the ritual epitomized colonization, the Bengali Renaissance, and the Indian women's movement all in one. This was no black and white issue, much less a dry subject. I needed to know everything I could

about this topic, and to say this project consumed me alive in the best way possible would be no understatement.

Hidden within the letters and studies that I scrounged were fascinating stories and emotions that betrayed ulterior motives. Despite the excitement and niche conversations, the unresolved tensions nagged me. Was the abolition of Sati beneficial or harmful? Does the tradition's ban reflect the white man's burden, or did it reinforce India's patriarchy? Everything was so intertwined that the abolition of Sati was a triumph that could not have happened without a tragic cultural loss. A westernized approach rooted in Indian values. And as I saw both the British and Indian perception of Sati, the lack of clarity reflected in my own seemingly lack of identity.

Was there a correct answer?

My nationalistic parents lamented the despicable British for oppressing a ritual that was so deeply ingrained in our religion and culture — one where a woman's noble sacrifice blessed future generations. My Caucasian partner was by no means pro-imperialism, but they applauded the British for banning a tradition where drugged women were dragged to a pyre and burned alive.

Two truths, yet with seemingly contradictory perspectives —my project encompassed the clash of values I felt growing up. Imperialistic or saviors. Communalism or individualism. Academic rules or inquisitive endeavors. The dichotomy seemed neverending and more importantly, incompatible. **How was I supposed to figure out which paradigm to adopt for the rest of my life if I couldn't even have an opinion about a History Fair project?**

Eastern and Western ideologies have such different prioritizations, and I was unsure about which was more important to me. Add that to the lost feeling every adolescent faces when deciding who they're supposed to be for the rest of their lives, and you have the perfect mixture for an existential crisis.

I felt guilty for chasing my dreams because it felt like I was leaving my family behind. I struggled with comprehending hook up culture and eating *terrible* vegetarian cafeteria food because of the meat-heavy American diets. I fit in (cultural assimilation after living in a Western country for two decades of your life will do that to you), but I didn't feel seen. I didn't know if I was doing the right thing, wanting the right things — I felt like I was dreaming in two different languages.



19th-century painting depicting the act of Sati from the Wellcome Institute

Why does Sati matter?

On the day of our competition, I triple-checked with clammy palms that my exhibit conveyed the intensity of the thousands of women who died and the complexities behind each of their individual stories. It was the first time I was presenting an independent research project, and the hard work and knowledge empowered me with confidence.

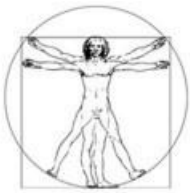
Researching history had grown on me because it gave me conviction in the stories that we were learning about. Facts were difficult to memorize and regurgitate on tests, but they also didn't matter to me. There was a narrative for each moment in time, and those tales were shaped by the very same emotions that we share in everyday.

Real people brought history to life and gave me a reason to care. Ram Mohan Roy showed me that not all Indians agreed with Sati, and it would be an oversimplification to divide an opinion by race. Saraswathi Ramabai revealed that Indian women could receive an education and acknowledge the complex factions that both saved and destroyed a woman's life. Jules Vernes (in his novel *Around the World in 80 Days*) romanticized the white man's burden and divulged in the fetishization of exotic culture, showing us the quintessential white knight syndrome that continues to hamper gender stereotypes today.

Reading ballots after the competition and, specifically, the judges' declaration that my project stood out *because* I focused on a tradition that straddled both a triumph and tragedy and not *despite* it made me realize that there could be a place for both worlds. **Sati was both an escape and a curse. One could not exist without the other, and perhaps I was like that too.** I could both embrace my passions and have filial piety. That ambiguity gave me some closure with my identity.

For my detail-oriented brain, it was initially a struggle to readjust to looking at the big picture, but fitting all these individual puzzle pieces into one larger narrative of Sati felt symbolic of my attempts to piece together my identity through an amalgamation of my experiences. My History Fair project on Sati gave me valuable lessons in embracing the past, reconciling contrasting perspectives to derive a new truth, and accepting that cultural duality is a strength — not a weakness.

Balancing both has not been easy (my existential crises speak for themselves), and it would be an oversimplification if I could embrace both sides in every situation I'm ever in. I've learned instead that some circumstances require a different side of me each time, and that's okay. Perhaps rising from the ashes of my History Fair project was a much more fulfilling drive to learn these women's stories and shape my own story. I guess the rest is history.



HISTORY OF YESTERDAY

<https://www.jou.ufl.edu/insights/amplifying-otherness/>

Communication and Technology Political Communication



Amplifying “Otherness”

This article by [Jasmine McNealy](#), [University of Florida College of Journalism and Communications](#) Telecommunication Associate Professor and Associate Director of the [Marion B. Brechner First Amendment Project](#), originally appeared in [Human Rights](#) [Racial Equality & New Information Technologies: Mapping the Structural Threats](#), a publication from The Promise Institute for Human Rights at the UCLA School of Law and the UCLA Center for Critical Internet Inquiry.

In their 2016 essay on inclusiveness and belonging, John A. Powell and Stephen Menendian called “othering” “[t]he problem of the twenty-first century.” Defining othering as a system and structure that marginalizes and perpetuates inequality based on categories of identity, including religion, sex, and race, among other things, the scholars identified political and social conditions and power dynamics that promote group based othering in the world. The human tendency toward categorization and unconscious bias helped to explain the dynamics of othering; segregation, secession, and assimilation were failed responses to othering or the problem of the other. Powell and Menendian proposed inclusion and belongingness – “unwavering commitment to not

simply tolerating and respecting difference but to ensuring that all people are welcome and feel that they belong in the society” – as the way forward.

I agree with powell and Menendian’s assessment of othering, and argue that emerging information technology is amplifying otherness through neglect, exclusion, and disinformation, all of which have significant consequences. Neglect, while perhaps the most recognized problem with emerging technology, is persistent. By neglect I mean the creation, use, and deployment of technology without regard for the disparate impacts they may have on communities different than the imagined audience. Ignorance of the effects of technology can be both intentional and unintentional. Unintentionality presumes a developer did not know or had not considered the possible impacts of their technology. Creators embed their creations with their own values, and values reflect culture and politics. If communities are outside of the scope of the creator’s purview, they may fail to recognize the consequences of that technology for that community.

More insidious, perhaps, is intentional neglect, when in the creation, use, or deployment of technology the impact on a community is both known and ignored. A readily available example of this amplified othering through neglect is the implementation of algorithmic decision-making systems in the criminal justice process in the United States. Though touted as a way to circumvent bias in human decision-making in pretrial and sentencing, these machine learning systems are trained on data reflecting societal biases and systemic racism in the American criminal justice system. And although organizations creating these systems are aware of the biases in the training data, and the consequences, they continue to sell these systems to state and local governments, which then deploy them on their constituents. Whether neglect is intentional or unintentional, then, the discriminatory impact on communities of people should not be acceptable.

Exclusion, keeping particular groups from participating in various ways, is a significant impact of amplified othering. Algorithmic decision systems, like those mentioned above, are more likely to exclude members of some communities from full participation based on biased historical data. Not only are these systems deployed in the United States criminal justice system, but also in the financial sector, where they are used to decide whether an institution should extend credit for home or business loans. Such systems have also been shown to have discriminatory impact when deployed in human resources systems in choosing candidates to interview for jobs, as well as candidates for graduate and professional schools. Unlike the unconscious bias that Powell and Menendian discuss in their essay, developers, scholars, journalists and others are now aware of the biases in these systems. Yet, adoption continues. This may be a reflection of persuasive framing communications used by governments and organizations creating and implementing these technologies despite public outcry.

Indeed, persuasion through framing is a part of language. Individuals and organizations persuade us to accept particular meanings and interpretations by making certain aspects of an idea more salient than others. Advances in communications technology

have 30 allowed the persuasive messages of disinformation campaigns to swell around the world, amplifying otherness, and resulting in race, gender, sexuality, and other identity-based violence. Social media manipulators are able to obscure the source of false information, while convincing those with a significant audience to propel their misleading messages. As a result, a larger audience may encounter deceptive communications, which may increase the vulnerability of certain communities. Social media disinformation campaigns have been identified as abetting the genocide of Rohingians in Myanmar and influencing elections in Kenya, Brazil, and the United States, among other countries. Emerging disinformation technology is amplifying othering in additional ways. Deepfakes technology, for example, allows the user to make it appear as though an individual is saying or doing something they have not said or done. Because of the severe ramifications this technology on our political systems and for those targeted, legislators are considering passing laws.

But can technology-specific laws change othering? Certainly, legislation aimed at banning particular uses of technology and the deployment of harmful technology on the public is welcome. The recent successful campaigns to ban the use of facial recognition technology in San Francisco, Somerville, Massachusetts, and Oakland, for example, are important to helping to push back against government surveillance and the disparate impacts of those activities. But even more impactful would be the passage or strengthening of laws aimed at remedying othering and its historic and current impacts. Voting rights, gender equity, fair pay, and comprehensive privacy/data governance legislation, among other things, and the enforcement of these laws would go a long way in helping to remedy the underlying social issues amplified in emerging technology. While we may, and should, prohibit the use and deployment of harmful technology, it is important that we use law to manifest the belongingness and inclusion powell and Menendian identify – “that all people are welcome and feel that they belong in the society.

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Students' Experiences Of OTHERING: Recommendations For Inclusive Classroom Climates

By Stela Saltaga A thesis submitted in partial fulfilment of the requirements for the degree of Master of Arts in Communication Boise State University

May 2017

<https://scholarworks.boisestate.edu/cgi/viewcontent.cgi?article=2311&context=td>

ABSTRACT

As universities in the United States become increasingly diverse, the problem of “othering” in classrooms becomes an important issue to explore. Othering is the process of treating or perceiving one as different from ourselves, and can result in alienation and other challenges for students succeeding in higher education. Embracing a qualitative research approach, this study explores the experiences of “othering” through the stories of twelve students who have been treated differently than others in the classroom. The findings of this study provide insights into the complex relationships between “othering” and students’ experiences in the classroom, and contributes to more informed understandings of “othering” so that scholars and practitioners can better address this increasingly important issue in the future. Specifically, with inclusive excellence efforts becoming increasingly common on university campuses, the findings of this study inform several strategies for instructors to promote more inclusive classroom climates.

CHAPTER ONE: THE PROBLEM OF BEING OTHERED

This thesis project explores the experience and potential consequences of “othering” in the university classroom. As students’ progress in higher education they frequently encounter obstacles or challenges to overcome. One such challenge is that of being othered in the classroom. Winslow and Winslow (2014) define othering as, “a discursive process of separating We from Other as a means of constructing hierarchies of power” (p. 1). In other words, othering involves a process of communication that somehow distinguishes individuals as different in ways that maintain particular power relations. Winslow and Winslow explain that the othering process:

Begins with the foundational principles of communication: before we Other, we symbolically create and exchange meaning, so that we can make sense of the world and influence one another. By attaching vocabularies to human experiences, we simplify our social lives, and all the complex dimensions of individual differences into a more coherent explanation of who we are and who we want to be. (p. 1)

On the surface, simplifying our social lives through vocabularies describing human experience does not seem harmful. However, research has revealed that this process of othering has detrimental effects among groups and for individual motivation. Johnson (2004) claims that othering creates an exclusionary matrix that treats the other as inferior; leading to inequality, tension, dissension, and even conflict between members of groups. Consequently othering is a problem because it can easily manifest into an “us versus them” mentality excluding or alienating those who are different (Johnson, 2004). By perpetuating a discourse of “difference,” in a potentially competitive climate such as academia, it contributes to a tendency to emphasize separation rather than unity (Vacarr, 2003). This discourse of difference can then lead to some groups taking priority over others and being offered more opportunities.

Jones, Castellanos, and Cole’s (2002) research revealed that othering has detrimental effects on a student’s motivation, identity, and comfort in a school setting. As a result, a student’s self-esteem, and overall success in higher education might suffer (Jones, Castellanos & Cole, 2002). Gaining a more extensive knowledge of the ways in which students are othered, and the ways in which the practice of othering affects students, is crucial for bringing

awareness to this problem in ways that may help to prevent it in the future. As such, for this thesis I propose exploring how students have experienced being othered in the classroom and to make sense of how othering has affected students' experiences in higher education. My hope is that insights gained in this study can help instructors become more aware of the issue of othering and consider possible solutions to reduce its prevalence in higher education and enhance efforts toward inclusive excellence and creating more inclusive classroom climates.

The Association of American Colleges and Universities (AACU) explain inclusive excellence as being an active process through which those in higher education achieve excellence in learning, teaching, student development, and institutional functioning, through diversity, inclusion, equity, and equity-mindedness (AACU, 2016). And those working on inclusive excellence with a focus on communication often seek ways to enhance the inclusive climate in the classroom through varied communication practices. This thesis aims to explore students' experiences being othered in the classroom and take this information to consider better practices for creating inclusive classroom climates as a part of larger inclusive excellence practices in higher education.

In studying the process of othering in communication, I intend to look at the ways in which people interact with those whom they deem different from themselves or as outside of their predetermined notions of normality. Those notions are often based on preconceived biases, ingrained in our cultural meaning systems, or the result of personal experience. The ways in which the practice of othering is carried out may vary from person to person, depending on their personal prejudices and vocabularies, however, othering occurs when the communicative practices result in someone perceiving him or herself as different from what is perceived "normal." Through this thesis research, I hope to discover what practices in the classroom result in othering and thus result in students feeling as if they do not belong or somehow do not meet the same standards as their peers.

Turner (1994) used the phrase "guests in someone else's house" to explain the feelings of alienation experienced by students who are othered. This description offers the sense that students made to feel outside of the dominant group may never entirely feel welcome or comfortable in their classroom surroundings. The ways in which faculty (and students) set some students apart from their peers through attention to particular differences has an effect. The problem of othering is a contemporary issue in American universities. Recent research shows that American universities are seeing an increase in the diversity of their student body in terms of students' ethnicity, nationality, race, social class, and age (Jones, Castellanos, & Cole, 2002). However, even with increasing numbers, many underrepresented students still feel as though they are part of the outer circle looking in.

One common course of action to alleviate the problem of othering is improving communication to promote inclusivity in the classroom. Classroom inclusivity is important to not only the individual students, but to the environment of the classroom as a whole. Ambrose, Bridges, DiPietro, and Lovett (2010) describe inclusive teaching strategies as crucial because:

Even though some of us might wish to conceptualize our classrooms as culturally neutral or might choose to ignore the cultural dimensions, students cannot check their sociocultural identities at the door, nor can they instantly transcend their current level of development. Therefore, it is important that the pedagogical strategies we employ in the classroom reflect an understanding of social identity development so that we can anticipate the tensions that might occur in the classroom and be proactive about them. (p. 169-170)

The potential benefits of creating inclusive classrooms are important, and thus many institutions are promoting efforts aimed at creating more inclusive campus environments supporting the more diverse students. More positive and inclusive changes such as these are a welcome introduction, but the practice of othering is still occurring.

Many scholars have studied the issue of othering in the classroom, explored the experience of othering in higher education, and provide possible solutions to the issue of othering (e.g., Gurin, Dey, Hurtado, & Gurin, 2003; Jones, Castellanos, & Cole, 2002; AACU, 2015). This literature reveals that othering is a very real, current, and potentially

avoidable issue in our education system. For instance, Carter (2008) talks about her experience being an African American student in a predominantly white school. She states:

I was acutely aware of my minority status. As a high achieving Black student, I was often referred to by my teachers as, 'the only one' or 'one of the few' in this category, which characterized me as exceeding despite their expectations. In the classroom, I was not always allowed to be an individual, but was often defined by my racial group membership. More often than not, I felt compelled to speak and behave in ways that would situate me as the representative of my racial group. (p. 230)

This situation, as well as her feeling compelled to speak as a representative of her identified racial group, is not uncommon. Other scholars have explored this issue when facing a situation where one is saddled with a set of expectations about who or what they should be, many times it is considered best to meet those expectations rather than to be further displaced (see Lu, 2001). Carter (2008) continues to describe how racial framing made her feel as though her work was inadequate compared to her white peers. She questions if the only reason she was receiving good grades was because her teachers thought that was the best a black student could accomplish. The words and actions of the instructors were influential enough to make Carter question her worth as a student entirely.

Instructional practices as related to cultural expectancies are critical to a discussion about othering because, in many cases, classroom practices that result in being made to feel as either on the inside or outside of the dominant culture can define one's place within society. American culture has established an ideal that some people find easier to attain, while others are precluded or prevented from achieving (Lu, 2001). For example, some are treated differently based on personal factors out of their control, and this may set them up for failure later on in life. Further, studies show that often students from underrepresented groups in higher education, or come from neighborhoods with lower socio-economic status, are expected to not only go to schools with less funding, but to either drop out early or not continue on with higher education.

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Genocide starts with OTHERing, then dehumanisation

From Wikipedia, the free encyclopedia <https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Genocide>



Nyamata Memorial Site 13.jpg

Genocide is the intentional destruction of a people—usually defined as an [ethnic](#), [national](#), [racial](#), or [religious](#) group—in whole or in part. [Raphael Lemkin](#) coined the term in 1944,^{[1][2]} combining the [Greek](#) word [γένος](#) (*genos*, "race, people") with the [Latin](#) suffix *-caedo* ("act of killing").^[3]

In 1948, the [United Nations Genocide Convention](#) defined genocide as any of five "acts committed with intent to destroy, in whole or in part, a national, ethnic, racial or religious group, as such." These five acts were: killing members of the group, causing them serious bodily or mental harm, imposing living conditions intended to destroy the group, preventing births, and forcibly transferring children out of the group. Victims are targeted because of their real or perceived membership of a group, not randomly.^{[4][5][6][7]}

The [Political Instability Task Force](#) estimated that 43 genocides occurred between 1956 and 2016, resulting in about 50 million deaths.^[8] The [UNHCR](#) estimated that a further 50 million had been displaced by such episodes of violence up to 2008.^[9] Genocide, especially large-scale genocide, is widely considered to signify the epitome of human [evil](#).^{[9][10][11][12]} As a label, it is contentious because it is moralizing,^[13] and has been used as a type of moral category since the late 1990s.^[14]

18th and 19th Centuries genocides

Dzungar genocide, the 1750s

Black War, 1825–1831

Mori Mori genocide, 1835–c.1860 New Zealand

Circassian genocide, 1860s

Selk'nam genocide, 1890s–1900s

Herero and Namaqua genocide, 1904–1907

Late Ottoman genocides

Greeks, 1914–1922

Assyrians, 1914–1924

Armenians, 1915–1923

World War II (1941–1945)

The Holocaust

Romani genocide

Genocide of Serbs by the Ustashe

Genocide of Croats and Muslims by the Chetniks



Naked [Soviet POWs](#) held by the Nazis in [Mauthausen concentration camp](#). Political scientist [Adam Jones](#) wrote: "[T]he murder of at least 3.3 million Soviet POWs is one of the least-known of modern genocides; there is still no full-length book on the subject in English."^[147]

Cold War

Bangladesh genocide (1971)

East Timor genocide (1974–1999)

Cambodian genocide (1975–1979)

Guatemalan genocide (1981–1983)

Anfal campaign (1986–1989)

Genocides in postcolonial Africa

Ikiza (1972)

Gukurahundi (1983–1987)

Introduction to Prejudice Issues - revision 156 2022_09_29
Isaaq genocide (1987–1989)

Rwandan genocide (1994)

Massacres of Hutus during the First Congo War (1996–1997)

Effacer le tableau (2002–2003) Darfur genocide (2003–)

Ethno-religious genocides in contemporary era

Bosnian genocide (1995)

Yazidi genocide (2014–2017)

Uyghur genocide (2014–) Rohingya genocide (2017–)

Related topics

Democide Ethnic cleansing Ethnocide Forced assimilation Mass killings under communist regimes Holodomor

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The complete Wikipedia article is about 30 pages long and is extremely painful to read.
<https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Genocide>

The 8 Stages of Genocide By Gregory H. Stanton

<http://www.genocide-watch.com/images/8StagesBriefingpaper.pdf>

The eight stages of genocide are

classification,

All languages and cultures require classification - division of the natural and social world into categories. We distinguish and classify objects and people. All cultures have categories to distinguish between "us" and "them," between members of our group and others. We treat different categories of people differently. Racial and ethnic classifications may be defined by absurdly detailed laws -- the Nazi Nuremberg laws, the "one drop" laws of segregation in America, or apartheid racial classification laws in South Africa. Racist societies often prohibit mixed categories and outlaw miscegenation. Bipolar societies are the most likely to have genocide. In Rwanda and Burundi, children are the ethnicity of their father, either Tutsi or Hutu. No one is mixed. Mixed marriages do not result in mixed children.

symbolization,

dehumanization,

Classification and symbolization are fundamental operations in all cultures. They become steps of genocide only when combined with dehumanization. Denial of the humanity of others is the step that permits killing with impunity. The universal human abhorrence of murder of members of one's own group is overcome by treating the victims as less than human. In incitements to genocide the target groups are called disgusting animal names - Nazi propaganda called Jews "rats" or "vermin"; Rwandan Hutu hate radio referred to Tutsis as "cockroaches." The targeted group is often likened to a "disease", "microbes", "infections" or a "cancer" in the body politic. Bodies of genocide victims are often mutilated to express this denial of humanity. Such atrocities then become the justification for revenge killings, because they are evidence that the killers must be monsters, not human beings themselves.

organization,

polarization,

preparation,

extermination, and

denial.

Inflammatory Rhetoric of Othering in Times of Humanitarian Crises

By Julia Khrebtan-Hörhager

<https://www.natcom.org/communication-currents/inflammatory-rhetoric-othering-times-humanitarian-crises>



OCTOBER 5, 2018

Current Commentary, Intercultural Communication, Political Communication

By Julia Khrebtan-Hörhager, Ph.D.

Jean-Paul Sartre once famously stated: “*l’enfer c’est les autres*” (Hell: it’s the **Others**).

More than half a century later, the most powerful political leaders have adopted and normalized the dangerous approach of demonizing the Other in their anti-immigrant and anti-refugee politics and rhetoric, which are currently redefining identity politics and reshaping borders around the globe.

When Donald Trump became U.S. President, his “America first” slogan quickly turned into a practice of white, misogynist, capitalist patriarchy, with strong xenophobic tendencies. Having normalized the term “Islamic terrorism,” introduced the controversial Muslim travel ban, and requested surveillance of certain mosques, the Grabber-in-Chief decided to build a wall to separate the United from Mexico – whose *bad hombres* were rapists, bringing drugs and crime to the country. Alarming, this presidential rhetoric both ignited hatred of the Other and spread like fire. Now, the echo of “Trumpian” rhetoric can be heard in multiple corners of the world, including Europe, whose anti-immigrant rhetoric exemplifies the Eurocentric West-and-the-Rest approach.

Italian interior minister Matteo Salvini acts like Trump's *Doppelgänger*, having adopted "*Italians first*" as his leading ideology. In addition to promises of an economic reboot (Italy-first), Salvini's slogans "*gli italiani prima di tutto!*" (the Italians first and foremost!) and "*al centro – gli italiani!*" (the Italians to the center!) contain promises of restoring national pride, promises that are tempting for the Italians in these turbulent times. In 2015, Salvini organized rallies with the slogan "*Stop the Invasion!*" Capitalizing on the refugee crisis, Salvini harshened the anti-immigrant rhetoric and accused thousands of illegal immigrants of stealing, raping innocent Italians, and drug-dealing.

Salvini had already turned away a boatload of more than 600 African refugees on a ship named *Aquarius*. Similarly, on the night of July 30, 2018, nearly 350 people were taken back to Libya – not an EU-approved "safe landing" point. Salvini responded with "*La pacchia è finita!*" ("The party is over") and Mussolini's famous "*Tanti nemici, tanto onore!*" ("Many enemies, much honor!")

Speaking of Mussolini, Pierre Moscovici, the EU's economics affairs commissioner, has said that the current political situation in Europe resembles the 1930s, when Germany's Hitler and Italy's Mussolini were in power. Moscovici has voiced fears that "little Mussolinis" are on the rise in Europe. Nonetheless, Salvini continued with anti-immigration rhetoric during the recent European conference on security and immigration. In response to Luxembourg's foreign minister Jean Asselborn's concern about Europe's ageing populations, Salvini conceptualized migrants as undesired slaves: "Maybe in Luxembourg there's this need for migrants, in Italy here's the need to help our kids have kids, not to have new slaves to replace the children we're not having."

Salvini is supported by other EU ultra-nationalist leaders from Poland, the Czech Republic, Slovakia, Austria, and Hungary. Salvini emphasized that Italy will "no longer be Europe's refugee camp," and Hungarian Prime Minister Viktor Orbán added: "Hungary has shown that we can stop migrants on land. Salvini has shown migrants can be stopped at sea." Gradually, rhetorical framing of the Other as a dangerous invader, and references to fascism have become the new communicative norms not only in Central and Eastern Europe and Italy, but also in Greece – another migrants' first point of entry. The mayor of Lesbos, Spyros Galinos, warned that immigrant detention centers had started to resemble "concentration camps." Nonetheless, Greece recently imprisoned Saraardini, a Syrian refugee and an Olympian swimmer, who saved 18 refugees in 2015 by swimming their waterlogged dinghy to the shores of Lesbos. Mardini is accused of people smuggling, espionage, and membership in a criminal organization. Apparently, when the fear of the Other dominates the national sentiment, rhetorical criminalization of humanitarian actions is another natural outcome.

Xenophobia is also growing in Sweden and Denmark. Today's Danish national rhetoric equates refugees with the social underworld and frames them as "ghetto." According to this rhetoric, new Danish law should separate "ghetto parents" from "ghetto children," to teach the latter proper Danish values (e.g., Christmas, Easter, and Danish language), with noncompliance resulting in a stoppage of welfare payments. Politicians' description of the ghettos has become increasingly sinister, substituting "integration" with "assimilation." Danish Prime Minister Lars Lokke Rasmussen warned that ghettos could "reach out their tentacles onto the streets by spreading violence." Historically, criminal organizations, including the Italian mafia, were framed as *La Piovra* (the octopus), so the correlation with brutal crimes is inevitable. Similarly, Sweden – a country that once prided itself on being the humanitarian superpower – is now strongly divided by migration. The humanitarian crisis there has overwhelmed social services and caused such fury that some refugee accommodation centers have been set on fire. Now, migration informs Swedish views on everything, and is rhetorically inseparable from crime, hospital waiting times, schools, and pensions.

Xenophobia and Islamophobia are also causing political crises in Germany (once the most pro-refugee country) and France (whose president is still the most pro-European leader). German national rhetoric has changed from encouraging the *Willkommenskultur* (the culture of open welcome) to warning against *Messermigration* ("knife migration," which associates migrants with violence with an Islamic twist). After his 2010 national bestseller, *Deutschland schafft sich ab* (Germany Abolishes Itself), which demonized Arabs and Turks, former Berlin senator of finance Thilo Sarrazin published another Islamophobic book, *Feindliche Übernahmen* (Hostile Takeovers). Far-right street violence has increased in

response to an alleged assassination of a German by a Syrian and an Iraqi refugee. Numerous protesters took to the streets, waving German national flags and chanting Nazi-era slogans. The demonstrators displayed placards that read “stop the refugee flood” and “defend Europe,” the latter adorned with an image of an automatic rifle. Even France, whose President Macron once openly praised German Chancellor Merkel for opening borders and saving Europe’s “public dignity,” has introduced a new bill that would criminalize illegal border crossings. Macron’s skilled rhetoric has shifted toward “humane and firm”: firm standing on firm borders, protecting Europe from the undesired, inassimilable, and threatening Others.

In her book, *No Is Not Enough: Resisting Trump’s Shock Politics and Winning the World We Need*, Naomi Klein writes, “If there is a single, overarching lesson to be drawn from the foul mood rising around the world, it may be this: we should never, ever underestimate the power of hate. Never underestimate the appeal of wielding power over “the Other,” be they migrants, Muslims, Blacks, Mexicans, women, the other in any form. Especially during times of economic hardship, when a great many people have good reason to fear that the jobs that can support a decent life are disappearing for good.” Sadly, we seem to live, to communicate, and to Other “by the book” – specifically, by Klein’s book. America and Europe are on the edge of rethinking and re-shifting their borders – geographical, political, and humanitarian. Speaking to the economic panic, and to the resentment felt by large segments of America and Europe about the changing faces of their countries, nationalist leaders create the feeling of dangerous nostalgia for the lost, mono-cultural worlds of a past that no longer exists, and that cannot exist in the future. It is time to embrace the globalizing realities, and to start thinking – and communicating – OtherWise.

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From Othering to Understanding: Perceiving 'Culture' in Intercultural Communication, Education and Learning

Anna Virkama

<https://trepo.tuni.fi/handle/10024/100773?show=full>

Abstract – This chapter investigates the concept of 'culture' in intercultural education and learning (IEL). Anthropologists have for decades argued for re-thinking of bounded categories such as ethnicity, culture and nationality. When nation states can be described as 'imagined communities', traditions, customs, values and belonging are frequently negotiated and re-negotiated. The paper discusses the challenges of teaching and learning about culture in the context of transnational mobility, cultural hybridity and super-diverse societies. While in theoretical discussions most authors recognize the difficulty of forcing the concept of culture into a solid, geographically bounded entity, practitioners – e.g. teachers, students and intercultural workers – have few methodological tools to apply these theories in practice. Without denying the importance of culture in contemporary societies, it argues for new methods in IEL which would respond to 21 century's needs in diverse societies.

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To illustrate how this approach is used in the classroom, I will provide an example based on my own experience as a trainer in intercultural work. In autumn 2008 I was invited to lecture about Islam for people who were in training to become intercultural trainers: health care workers, trade union people, and students among others. As I arrived early before my turn, I listened to a lecturer, whose turn was before me, giving a small exercise to the students. She had drawn on the blackboard a scale from 0 to 100 and the students had to situate different 'cultures' on the scale in relation to time, social hierarchies, gender roles and so forth. The aim of the scale was to show how Americans are more individualistic than Japanese, Russians have larger power hierarchies than Finns, and so on. I recognized this as an adaptation of Hofstede's (1997) scale. Come my turn, I realized, that what is expected from the lecturer in this kind of training situation is to offer some concrete models of how different cultures operate and how we could, based on those cultural 'facts', handle problematic situations which the educators may need to solve in their work. Yet, this viewpoint has numerous problems. First, there is a danger of overemphasizing the role of 'cultural' or 'religious' behavior in people's lives and forgetting that there might be other driving forces such as

economic, political or social motivations behind the acts which are justified by using cultural discourse. The second problem is that since we do not in everyday life, encounter 'cultures' as such but rather we are only able to observe limited cultural elements, adopted perhaps only by certain part of a specific population, there is a great risk of generalizing these elements as representing the totality.

The situation in the classroom may be just the current state of intercultural training in practice, but it also tells us about the uneasy confrontation of practitioners and researchers: the former are in need of very practical information about how to deal with cultural

differences in their work and at the same time, the latter is reluctant to provide any concrete guidelines or tools. Culture, in this context, refers to shared meanings and values of a group of people, usually living in the same geographical area and speaking the same language. This definition, with some variations, is the most commonly used in literature dealing with intercultural education and learning (IEL in this text).

The theories of *intercultural communication* started to develop in the United States in 1970s for the purposes of international business training. Among the best known theorists of this interdisciplinary field there were names such as Edward T. Hall, Geert Hofstede and William B. Gudykunst. This functionalist, 'user friendly' approach saw cultures as separate entities and aimed to overcome difficulties involved in intercultural encounters. In this sense, intercultural communication is based on the idea that bigger the cultural differences are, the more difficult it is to overcome these problems. Therefore, there needs to be scientific methods to measure the cultural differences between cultures which can help to analyse the specific difficulties in intercultural encounters and offer a method that can be learned to solve those difficulties. For this purpose, different tools were used, such as diagrams of national characters, handbooks and models that aim to demonstrate how different cultures function. Nationality defines a person and her relationship to the others (of other nationalities)

a priori, but there are certain 'rules' that can be learned in order to facilitate the encounters and communicate despite the differences. According to scholars of non-essentialist lines, it is not correct to talk about 'cultures' as entities, but rather of cultural elements and fragments which can manifest in different ways and take different meanings depending of the context. The non-essentialist view of culture that many anthropologists have adopted within the poststructuralist research agenda has made it difficult to reify the concept of culture for teaching and learning purposes. Hence, there is certainly a need to re-think IEL from the perspective that takes into account the danger of cultural stereotyping but at the same, is able to provide educators and learners with concrete tools for understanding how culture operates in complex, everyday life situations.

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Disability Culture Extracts from Far From the Tree by Andrew Solomon

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There is something ironic in prejudice against the disabled and their families, because their plight might befall anybody. Straight men are unlikely to wake up gay one morning, and white children don't become black; but any of us could be disabled in an instant. People with disabilities make up the largest minority in America; they constitute 15 percent of the population, though only 15 percent of those were born with their disability and about a third are over sixty-five. Worldwide, some 550 million people are disabled. The disability-rights scholar Tobin Siebers has written, "The cycle of life runs in actuality from disability to temporary ability back to disability, and that only if you are among the most fortunate."

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The difficulties such families face have long been acknowledged by the outside world; only recently have the pleasures become a topic of general conversation. Resilience is the contemporary gloss on what used to be thought of as perseverance. It is both a way to reach larger objectives—functionality and happiness—and an objective in itself, inseparable from what Aaron Antonovsky, progenitor of the study of resilience, calls a "sense of coherence." Parents whose expectations are diverted by children with horizontal identities need resilience to rewrite their future without bitterness. Those children need resilience, too, and ideally parents foster it. Ann S. Masten wrote in *American Psychologist* in 2001, "The great surprise of resilience research is the ordinariness of the phenomenon." Resilience used to be posited as an extraordinary trait, seen in the Helen Kellers of the world, but cheery recent research suggests that most of us have the potential for it, and that cultivating it is a crucial part of development for everyone

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While optimism can propel day-to-day life forward, realism allows parents to regain a feeling of control over what is happening and to come to see their trauma as smaller than it first seemed. The potential pitfalls are wishful thinking, self-blame, escapism, substance abuse, and avoidance; resources might include faith, humor, a strong marriage, and a supportive community, along with financial means, physical health, and higher education. There is no definitive roster of strategies, although words such as transformation and enlightenment occur. Studies are highly contradictory and seem often to reflect researcher bias. Numerous studies, for example, show that divorce is more frequent among parents of children with disabilities, and an equal number show the divorce rate is significantly lower among such parents; further research finds divorce rates consistent with those in the general population. Parents who cope poorly with a disabled child are worn down by the effort in the same way that parents who are coping successfully seem to grow strong, but all of them are both worn down and strengthened. Being part of a group seems consistently to have meaning; the redemptive power of intimacies born from struggle is immense. In our Internet age, when every challenge or disability has a community attached to it, the parents of people with any given challenge can find their horizontal community as well. Although most families do find meaning in their predicament, fewer than one in ten professionals who deal with them believes it. "I was determined not to be around folks who saw us as tragic," one exasperated mother wrote. "Unfortunately, that included my family, most professionals, and just about everyone else I knew." A doctor's or social worker's refusal to recognize such parents' reality because it is happier than anticipated is a kind of betrayal.

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My study is of families who accept their children, and how that relates to those children's self-acceptance—a universal struggle we negotiate partly through the minds of others. In turn, it looks at how the acceptance of the larger society affects both these children and their families. A tolerant society softens parents and facilitates self-esteem, but that tolerance has evolved because individuals with good self-esteem have exposed the flawed nature of prejudice. Our parents are metaphors for ourselves: we struggle for their acceptance as a displaced way of struggling to accept ourselves. The culture is likewise a metaphor for our parents: our quest for high esteem in the larger world is only a sophisticated manifestation of our primal wish for parental love. The triangulation can be dizzying

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In spite of these persisting challenges, the disability rights movement has made tremendous strides. The US Rehabilitation Act of 1973, passed by Congress over President Nixon's veto, prohibited discrimination against people with disabilities in any federally funded program. This was followed by the Americans with Disabilities Act, passed in 1990, and several subsequent acts that appeared to shore it up. In 2009, Vice President Joe Biden opened the Special Olympics by declaring special-needs advocacy a "civil rights movement" and announcing the new post of special assistant to the president for disability policy. The courts, however, have narrowed the scope of laws pertinent

Members of minorities who wish to preserve their self-definition need to define themselves in opposition to the majority. The more accepting the majority is of them, the more rigorously they need to do so, because their separate identity collapses if they countenance its integration into the majority world. Multiculturalism rejects the 1950s vision of a world in which everyone is subsumed by uniform Americanness, and chooses one in which we all inhabit our own treasured particularities. In his classic work *Stigma*, Erving Goffman argues that identity is formed when people assert pride in the thing that made them marginal, enabling them to achieve personal authenticity and political credibility. The social historian Susan Burch calls this "the irony of acculturation": society's attempts to assimilate a group often cause that group to become more pronounced in its singularity. When I was in college in the mid-1980s, it was common practice to speak of the "differently abled" rather than the "disabled." We joked about the "differently grunted" and the "differently agreeable." These days, if you talk about an autistic child, he differs from "typical" children, while a dwarf differs from "average" people. You are never to use the word normal, and you are certainly never to use the word abnormal. In the vast literature about disability rights, scholars stress the separation between impairment, the organic consequence of a condition, and disability, the result of social context. Being unable to move your legs, for example, is an impairment, but being unable to enter the public library is a disability. An extreme version of the social model of disability is summarized by the British academic Michael Oliver: "Disability has nothing to do with the body, it is a consequence of social oppression." This is untrue, even specious, but it contains a valid challenge to revise the prevalent opposite assumption that disability resides entirely in the mind or body of the disabled person. Ability is a tyranny of the majority. If most people could flap their arms and fly, the inability to do so would be a disability. If most people were geniuses, those of moderate intelligence would be disastrously disadvantaged. There is no ontological truth enshrined in what we think of as good health; it is merely a convention, one that has been strikingly inflated in the past century. In 1912, an American who lived until the age of fifty-five had had a good, long life; now, death at fifty-five is considered a tragedy. Because most people can walk, being unable to walk is a disability; so is being unable to hear; and so is being unable to decipher social cues. It's a matter of votes, and the disabled question these majority decisions.

Most adults with horizontal identities do not want to be pitied or admired; they simply want to get on with their lives without being stared at. Many dislike Jerry Lewis's use of pathetic children to get funds for genetic research. The NBC news correspondent John Hockenberry, who has a spinal injury, said, "Jerry's kids' are people in wheelchairs on television raising money to find a way to prevent their ever having been born." The anger is pervasive. "Adults responded to my difference by helping me, but some of my schoolmates responded by calling me names," wrote Rod Michalko, who is blind. "Only much later did I realize that helping and name-calling amounted to the same thing." Arlene Mayerson, an expert in disability rights law, contends that benevolence and good intentions have been among disabled people's worst enemies throughout history. The able-bodied can be generous narcissists: they eagerly bestow what they feel good about giving without considering how it will be received.

Conversely, the social model of disability demands that society modify the way business is done to empower people with disabilities, and we make such adjustments only when lawmakers accept that life can be painful for those who live at the margins. Patronizing gestures can be justly scorned, but increased empathy is often a precondition of political acceptance and an engine of reform. Many disabled people say that the social disapprobation they experience is much more burdensome than the disability from which they suffer, maintaining simultaneously that they suffer only because society treats them badly, and that they have unique experiences that set them apart from the world—that they are eminently special and in no way different.

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This book's conundrum is that most of the families described here have ended up grateful for experiences they would have done anything to avoid.

Disability Culture Extracts from: The Deaf Challenge

I know myself only too well and am continuing to discover things about myself, some of which delight and some of which disturb me. This is the natural outcome of personal growth. Although, from time to time, I can see myself behaving in ways which shock or disturb others, I am learning to recognise why this happens and that by behaving in this or any other way, surely I am not so very different from the majority of my fellow human beings?

However, I have made a startling observation in recent years. Apparently, I *am* vastly different from this majority and my behaviour, whatever form it takes, is, in the eyes of that majority, a negative 'symptom' of my difference. If I were then to believe what I see, I would conclude that I am not *me*, but some kind of construct of other people's perceptions of *a small part of me*. Thus, I am conscious that I have spent a large part of my life isolating myself from the de-humanising, blinkered vision of the majority out of a sense of self-preservation, a need to understand why these perceptions existed, and a strong conviction in my right to be human.

Arriving at an understanding has not been easy — recognising our own reality and how it merges or conflicts with the reality of others is never easy and takes a great deal of time and patience. Within the confines of the deaf-hearing dichotomy, however, feelings can become very confused from whichever perspective they are viewed. Even my early life was characterised by the growing recognition that the path of self-exploration and the achievement of self-realisation could be steep, rocky and strewn with obstacles and challenges which needed to be cleared or explained before the journey could proceed.

As a deaf child I was objectified as 'impaired' and not 'normal'. This became central to my self-esteem under the wealth of external reinforcements, from the abuse of psychological testing to 'does she take sugar?' attitudes.¹

1 This refers to the situation where a person is seen to be incapable of communicating directly or making decisions for themselves. Questions are therefore directed at a third party who is expected to answer on behalf of that person, often as if that person were not in the room.

I subsequently retreated into and gained solace from a fantasy world peopled by characters who were more companionable than those who occupied the real world. In this world, it did not matter what I lacked because that could always be imagined and allowed to assume its proper place in the identity that was attempting to shape itself in spite of the wiles of the adult majority. Being deaf could be transformed into something beautiful and colourful, something good. I can remember feeling greatly confused, even angered by the dichotomy between the messages of the verbal and the more subtle communication of bodily language and facial expression, by the depth

of a glance that could warm or freeze. Even in those early days, I suppose I was given to philosophical musings, because I wondered how the doleful eyes of my dog could convey the same depth of expression and the same feelings; and yet there were no words. I looked at flocks of birds in the sky, flying in formation, great shadows sweeping across the fields, perfectly ordered and perfectly harmonised, and the patterns within patterns of trees and oceans, and saw communication; and yet there were no words. I felt the rippling, velvet muscles of horses and sensed the language of excitement at the imminent taste of freedom in the world outside the stable-box; and yet there were no words. But the words, by themselves, conveyed little; they became a cacophony of noise, and feelings became jarred by the distortion. Finally, there were no words for me, only 'a mouthful of air' (W.B. Yeats, quoted in Burgess, 1992) and a jumble of lip patterns which, in their defiance of the laws of nature, could not create order out of chaos. So deficient were the spoken dialogues of the real world that it was not long before the desire to bring to life my inner landscape translated itself into the dance of words before my eyes.

As my isolation continued, I began to put names to vague feelings. The process of learning was given more profundity by the time available for reflection and for searching deeper for understanding by opening myself to the truths of others. Again, perhaps, we feel echoes of the counsellor's trade for, like many counsellors, I read anything and everything to broaden my horizons and I write and re-write my journey through life and my relationships with others. But, for a long time, my reading was another manifestation of my fantasy world, a substitute for the world I had lost. As I searched deeper, I came upon the work of practitioners and theorists as diverse as Carl Rogers, Abraham Maslow, Michel Foucault, Alice Miller, Sheldon Kopp, C.G. Jung, Virginia Satir, Liz Greene and Dorothy Rowe. Their words communicated and continue to communicate to me a penetrating sense of meaning which assists me in understanding what I do and who I am and enables me to go one step deeper in my search for truth. They also granted me words when I had none, have opened doors when the majority closed them, and have given me life when I might have been condemned to the half-life of a construct who could be re-built and moulded on the whim of the majority.

As I sought my own way of building my self, my 'real' education continued. To stand a chance of furthering myself I was told that I had to be prepared to climb the precipice, suffer the cuts and bruises to my sense of humanity in silence and cope with my

broken ears. Only then could I attain the prize awaiting me at the top. I dutifully climbed, feeling hollow inside, and *was* hurt. When I reached the top, I discovered that the prize was a life in the hearing world, under the guise of a hearing identity — whereupon I suffered an acute attack of vertigo because I realised that I was being offered the stick without the ice-cream 'for my own good' (Miller, 1987a, 1987b). The precipice became a different kind of symbol. It meant that I *became* my broken ears and that there was nothing in between. The chasm which had opened up between who I thought I was and who I actually was was of such enormity that my roots had become shrouded in the mists of the past. I had, in effect, lost my self. Correspondingly, as the hearing world moved the goalposts further and further away, I lost faith in my ability to achieve and lost touch with both my

own feelings and the feelings of others. It was at this point in my life that I had, in the 1970s, my initial contacts with the counselling community, first as a client and later through an introduction to counselling skills and experiential encounter groups. It was as if I needed to establish a bridge between the client and the counsellor part of myself, as if I wanted to find my own wise counsel because I had been so often betrayed by the counsel of others. I was finally found, and 'held', enabled to feel safe, and empowered to rebuild my life and to find love through counselling. But my story is not yet over, for there are elements of it which remain in a half-light, hidden behind the explicit messages it carries. It is the deeper meaning of my story that constitutes The Deaf Challenge.

It is a predisposition of the hearing world to believe that language is confined to spoken language and therefore that 'hearing' is inseparable from language and communication. Thus, from the counsellor's perspective, it could be said that the possibility of not hearing or of not speaking becomes synonymous with a loss of infinite proportions in experiential, psychological and socio-emotional terms; this runs the risk of being displaced onto clients who harbour the deepest of feelings but may not have the words or the language to 'talk' them through. The prospect of blocked or damaged communication within the counselling relationship can therefore become associated with professional failure. For those that do not know themselves in the counsellor's way, the risk of displacement is even greater.

American psychologist and linguist, Harlan Lane, well known as a chronicler of the lives and history of deaf people, has referred to the fear of losing speech and hearing as 'existential dread' which originates from an 'extrapolative leap' or 'egocentric error' made by hearing society which is based on a stereotypical view of the state of deafness. He says:

'To imagine what deafness is like, I imagine my world without sound — a terrifying prospect, and one that conforms quite well with the stereotype we project onto members of the deaf community. I would be isolated, disorientated, uncommunicative, and unreceptive to communication. My ties to other people would be ruptured. I remember my parents censoring me with silence; it was bearable for four hours, and then I implored their forgiveness. I recall the "silent treatment" of offenders in the army. The Tunisian novelist Albert Memmi, author of several sociological studies of oppression, observes in his book on dependency: "The person who refuses to communicate severs the psychological ties that connect him to the other person. In so doing, he isolates the other person and can drive him to despair." A world without sound would be a world without meaning. What could be more fundamental to my sense of myself than my sensory milieu — unless it be my spoken language?'

(Lane, 1992, pp. 10-11)

While deaf people search for a meaningful existence, they are faced with the knowledge that existential dread has eaten its way into the core of the counselling profession and the minds of even the most eminent of psychotherapists:

'Most recently, I have been into something so serious, comprehensive and preoccupying, that I have chosen to discuss it with all of my patients, in groups and individually. The problem was physical, but had many overwhelming feelings related to it.

About three years ago, I suffered a sudden and profound hearing loss in my left ear. It was diagnosed correctly as irreversible nerve deafness but was mistakenly attributed to an exotic, highly selective virus. Hearing aids were of no use, and after a brief period of panic (lest I lose the hearing in my other ear), I adjusted with counter phobic insistence that other people recognise my limitation; sorry they had to contend with it, but after all I give a good deal, and there was no reason why they couldn't help out by speaking up.'

(Kopp, 1971, pp. 159-60, italics added)

The goal of a common language is a seductive one, for language is the means by which human beings live together and the medium of their cultural and experiential expression. The presence of an 'alien' language strikes fear into the soul of the outsider, because it has no meaning relative to the experience or culture of that outsider. Thus, as Lane says, the prospect of losing the means of living causes deafness to become a hurricane sweeping across the inner landscape and demolishing everything in its path. Whose fear is this and from whence came the hurricane? And why is that fear etched in the inner landscapes of so many deaf

people, who, even if they are successful in reaching the top of the contrived precipice, arrive with open wounds and emotional scars which serve as a constant reminder of their deaf selves? Deafness and hearingness are the two ends of a vast and complex continuum which tends

to be regarded as a divided community; but it is the legacy of the hearing majority that the two ends of the continuum came to be perceived as two distinct groups in the first place. They are psychologically, like strength and weakness, but two sides of the same coin, and, in being so, are inseparable. It may be that the emphasis on the positive aspects of being deaf or on 'coping' with deafness is linked to a widespread and very human tendency to shy away from the 'problems' of others to the point of outright dismissal guided by the old philosophy 'laugh and the world laughs with you, weep and you weep alone'. In counselling terms, we need to be careful with the attribution of value; admiration or respect for one side of the coin should not result in the oppression of the other, for all clients deserve the opportunity to feel safe and to grow from the sanctuary of the counsellor's core values and not from the precariousness of the counsellor's deepest fears. Counsellors who remain unaware of these fears are at risk from perceiving their deaf clients 'problems' to be the result of an anomaly, with a 'solution' which resides in the belief that accepting a narrow interpretation of the 'norm' will somehow resolve a deaf person's internal struggles. Against such a background, the 'solution' will be incomplete and temporary, and possibly lead to a situation where the client becomes dependent on the counsellor or, at worst, is irreparably damaged by the misconceived values underlying counselling process.

It has long been my belief that, in essence, counselling is 'all about loving' and that counsellors reject 'the pursuit of authority or control over others' in order to 'seek to share power' (Mearns and Thorne, 1988). I find it hard to grapple with the evidence that counsellors, in being human, are not infallible to the abuse of power or to the forces of prevailing attitudes and assumptions about deaf people, though it is not difficult to see how this has happened. Counsellors will have very little information about deaf people, unless they have lived or worked with number of them. They could be forgiven for general assumptions such as all deaf people can learn to speak, all deaf people use sign language, all deaf people feel bad about being deaf, all deaf people want to be hearing again, BSL is the natural or preferred language of all deaf people, because these are examples of general statements which are made time and time again in denial or in ignorance of the diversity of Britain's deaf community. Moreover, these statements say nothing about Black deaf people, deaf women, deaf gays and lesbians, older deaf people, deaf children and so on because the focus is on deafness and not the individual deaf person. But this does not explain away the ample evidence that the existence of deaf people has been widely ignored within the counselling profession, which can be seen in the absence of reference to deaf people in highly respected counselling texts and on most training courses. Existing trends suggest further that the counselling profession runs the risk of taking the same route as other professions in formulating its understanding of deafness. History repeats itself, as deaf people are once more being marginalised to fringe activities and are being prevented from gaining valuable insight into counselling process or contributing to it, because they are being viewed within the context of an 'infirmity' or 'medical' model of disability.^{3 4} Within the counselling profession, I find the use of this model, and the assumptions that underpin it, difficult to reconcile, because it seems to work against acceptance and non-judgementalism and to deny the role of societal attitudes and assumptions in shaping the individual identity. This is particularly important because this book is necessarily about people, about their inner worlds of feelings, thoughts and intuitions, about their own experiential landscapes and their relationships to those of other people, and, in particular, about their need to harbour a strong and real sense of themselves. Deaf people, whatever the reasons for their deafness, or their linguistic or cultural affiliations are capable of leading the counsellor into unexplored territories. If influential members of the profession can experience, even temporarily, existential dread, what hope is there for the deaf client who, on seeking help, realises that he or she personifies something of which the counsellor is very afraid? Such a polarisation may well exist within many deaf—hearing counselling relationships, and possibly, as we shall see, within deaf—deaf counselling relationships also. But this polarisation seems to belie the fabric of communication of which we are all a part, despite our different experiences. Rather than learning how to deal with fear and prejudice, or the perceived threat of professional inadequacy by viewing The Deaf Challenge as an opportunity for further growth and understanding, the parochial view of the hearing majority within the counselling profession mitigates against a truly integrated approach to counselling capable of responding to all manifestations of deaf clients' problem situations and contexts, and has worked against access of some deaf people to the therapeutic milieu:

'This propensity to stereotype deaf people as difficult and high-risk candidates for (counselling), as is done with the poor, disadvantaged, disabled, old, and nonverbal populations serves only to thwart their opportunity for emotional growth and psychological enhancement.'
(Sussman, 1988, p.5)

Counsellors may yet be ignorant of the knowledge held by those who work with deaf people. This is that medical and infirmity models of disability have their origins in a history of oppression which has ensured that deaf people are part of a dependency culture who are 'cared for' by the hearing majority. It is this image of deaf people which has been perpetrated by those who, contrary to the counsellor's creed, do not wish to share power nor accept deafness as

3 The 'infirmity' or 'medical' model of disability or deafness is based on the assumption that disability or deafness is an illness, and the consequences are ultimately the responsibility of the person who 'suffers from the illness. Such models deny the possibility that a person who is disabled or deaf, as part of the intricate network of

society, can be disabled by society which as a whole has come to view deafness or disability in terms of disabling models and stereotypes and therefore contributes to the way in which disability or deafness manifests itself in the individual.

4 In the 1993 edition of the Handbook of Counselling in Britain (edited by Dryden, Charles-Edwards and Woolfe), there is one chapter devoted to 'Counselling people with disabilities/chronic illnesses' which states as one of its five principles: 'People with disabilities and handicaps should be offered counselling which is as near "normal" as possible'. It does not mention deaf people.

a different kind of 'norm'. It can be anticipated that if the counselling profession were to respond to The Deaf Challenge by remaining true to its core values, and working towards the empowerment of deaf people, it will cause a great deal of trouble for those who use these models as frameworks for their work with deaf people:

'When we accept and value our own self we cease to be afraid of other people. We no longer have superiors and inferiors, but only equals with whom we can co-operate and share while we take responsibility for ourselves. We no longer feel deprived and envious, so we can abandon revenge and greed. We have learnt the wisdom of Lao Tsu: "He who knows that enough is enough always have enough." Because we value ourselves, we value others, now and to come, and the planet on which we all live. We reject those who seek to dominate and manipulate us, and who, in elevating greed, revenge and pride to virtues, place our lives and our planet in jeopardy. Obviously, if we all decided to accept and value ourselves, we would cause those who have power over us a great deal of trouble.'

(Dorothy Rowe, in Masson, 1989, pp. 22-23)

I am deaf, and in being deaf I, like many other deaf people, present a challenge to the communicative foundations, the norms and the values of a hearing world. I am also a counsellor, and in being a counsellor, my task in life is often to challenge my clients' negative perceptions of themselves in journeying with them towards personal growth and change. As a deaf person, I have been so demoralised and sickened by what these norms and values mean to deaf people that I have wished I could change the hearing world. I have dreamed of a power-sharing union and of equality, and, in trying to be an agent for change I have wasted energy, sacrificed my sense of self, and lived in a state of constant anger to the point where I was torn to pieces. As a counsellor, and through counselling, I have learnt that the only real change that can be achieved is within ourselves, through the liberation of the unconscious and the acceptance of who we are. Against this, all other change is temporary and transparent. The counsellor's way of self-exploration and self-acceptance has pointed me in the direction of the light from the mire of my darkest hours, but in looking outwards, I have seen that deaf consciousness, in its many different forms, is often prevented from making these discoveries and from learning to value or accept itself. It has become submerged in hearing people's fear of the other side of hearingness, and this has prevented an attraction of opposites which, our learned scholars tell us, is the spice of life and even the bedrock of evolutionary change. Many 'counsellors' working with deaf people have become caricatures of the counsellors I have grown to respect, in their belief that deaf people are 'faulty' and the key to growth therefore lies in conforming to the hearing way. Genuine counsellors do not have the information with which faulty perceptions can be challenged. And so, paradoxically, *The Deaf Challenge* and the counselling challenge, instead of complementing each other, have arrived at this state of embargo. I feel that this embargo is a reflection of the vastly different ways in which counsellors interpret the term 'challenge' and the particular quality of *The Deaf Challenge*. Most practising counsellors acknowledge that helping clients to identify and challenge self-defeating perspectives on their problem situations is an activity which often occurs in the first stage of any counselling relationship. Self-defeating behaviours are those comfortable but outmoded frames of reference which keep us fettered to patterns of thinking and behaving which may feel safe but which can deny our reality and our creativity. The initial response to challenge and confrontation is often a defensive one, the level of defence being related to the strength of the challenge or confrontation and the degree of safety experienced by the client in their present scenario, and so the skill of challenging carries an aura of risk. The first stage of the counselling relationship can be prolonged if the client is resistant to moving beyond their initial subjective understanding of what is happening to them, and indeed, if the resistance is strong, the client may never move to a position where they can sow the seeds for growth and change, unless the counsellor is prepared and able to take that risk. This is helped by the fact that there is a preponderance of counsellors who are 'first stage specialists' (Egan, 1990).

For the counselling profession, *The Deaf Challenge* is a stern one, because it asks that difficult issues are made explicit and may carry with it a hint that the values of the profession are being undermined. Further, because the challenge comes from a sphere of existence which is largely unknown, it is quite difficult to present it in a way which is not threatening or confrontational, for, in the end it is an expression of deaf people's anger and despair at the harm that has been done to them by the so-called 'helping' professions, with their 'mask of benevolence' (Lane, 1992).

The Deaf Challenge is on two levels. The first is to do with the access of deaf people to counselling and the second is related to the professional contribution that deaf people might make to the development of advanced counselling skills and the understanding of non-verbal communication. It invites the profession to:

move beyond the idea of counselling as a 'talking through' of clients' problem situations

modify stereotyped perceptions and behaviours in respect of deaf people and the concept of deafness

modify theoretical and practical approaches to counselling

modify the language of counselling

own their fear of deafness

develop new perceptions of deafness and deaf people which would allow them to face their own challenges from a position of strength

accept their flawed interpretation of critical experiences, behaviours and feelings on the part of deaf people

cease evading and distorting deaf people's real issues

identify and understand the consequences of their behaviour towards deaf people
abandon resistance to deaf people's uniqueness and recognise its relevance to the counselling profession as a whole.

When faced with the challenge of painful truths, it is sometimes difficult to look beyond the dark storm clouds and see the glimpse of a rosy dawn, because, as counsellors know, few welcome change unconditionally and with open arms, and, as it is part of the counsellor's work to assist clients in finding the inner resources to meet change, it is part of the profession's task to inform itself and to grow. The counselling profession, in common with other helping professions, is slowly beginning to adjust to the reality of our diverse and multi-cultural society, and time is therefore increasingly ripe for introducing new ideas and concepts. But this does not remove the possibility that such ideas and concepts will be challenging, even threatening, because they pose searching questions about counselling process.

BOOK AND READER — THE MAKING OF A RELATIONSHIP

My energy finally came to be harboured in using the deaf experience to stimulate the potential for further growth within the counselling community, and to unite deaf people and counsellors in their search for an easier truth and a more valued existence. In this, I hope that *The Deaf Challenge* will appeal to strengths rather than weaknesses. A counselling relationship necessarily begins with both client and counsellor unconsciously, and sometimes consciously addressing their hopes and fears in respect of each other, contained within a confidential, safe environment. The understanding and acceptance of these hopes and fears generates trust, genuineness and empathy, on which all counselling relationships thrive. It follows from this that it is entirely appropriate to begin our journey by developing a deeper understanding of our hopes and fears as counsellors and as deaf people, in order to acknowledge the existence of deaf experience and attempt to understand what this means for deaf people. From my own deaf experience, I am convinced that the hearing way is only one way of being in the world. The 'problem' that deaf people present to the dominance of hearing people is not so much a result of ignorance of this fact, but more to do with the realisation that the deaf way comes from a different 'centre'. I use the term 'centre' here to mean the soul or identity, or the point from which something grows.⁵ Deaf people's centre, and the possible source of their unity, at the most fundamental level, comes from their unique experience and their potential to love and express themselves, in different ways, as a response to or through the visual, spatial world. When realised, this potential belies the concept of silence, for the deaf world is not and need not be a silent world made only of fear and prejudice. It can relate to and inform that part of the hearing experience which is implicit and hidden. In our deaf world, we see things and people in ways which hearing

5 This term has also been used in a slightly different sense by Padden and Humphries (1988) to describe cultural differences between deaf and hearing people, which will be discussed in Chapter 1.

people are often at a loss to understand, and we have given these 'seeing skills' expression in ways which can be transferred. That is, in part, what this book aims to do, but it has presented me with a personal challenge as I float the possibility of relationships. How can I show the experiential divide between deaf and hearing people, and the multiple realities of the deaf community in such a way that empathy can grow? How can I find new options and generate new potential instead of eliminating them? How can I make counselling a more usable, visual experience for deaf people? How can I develop a common language? No matter how clear and straightforward the written words, the concepts explored in this book may have limited meaning for some people because they are presented in a language which can only partially express the deaf experience, and the concepts themselves may be alien to hearing people. I have explored many ways of resolving this problem, and, in the end, I always came back to the words of this book made visual by pictures or images, sometimes serious and sometimes humorous. It is part of my hope that this dual approach will facilitate a joining. Like many deaf people, I am just a small cog in a massive wheel of history and tradition and am searching for truth and justice for the inhabitants of our planet. That I began with my own truth, which, on the surface, may be of little relevance for others, is not something that removes the challenge of the search, nor my belief in the existence of a greater truth and a common humanity, however deeply they are disguised or hidden. I am also, like many counsellors who are still, and perhaps always will be learning from the wisdom of their teachers and their clients, cautious and humble in my expression and driven only to share it in the best way I know how.

The 'sailing image' has become an important part of my inner landscape, and I will use it in many different forms throughout this book. In part, I am sure that this is to do with my strong roots in nature, and my love of the symbolism and mystery of natural objects which harbour the clues in my hunt for answers. But it is also because I see the process of counselling as a journey to the island of growth over seas which can be calm, motionless and crystal clear by the light of a guiding moon, or wrecked by tidal waves thrown up by vast storms and the darker side of the moon. As deaf people and counsellors embark from their own communities in their search for the island, they know that they must learn how to sail alongside each other and navigate the waters together. Each boat carries different seeds for learning and for nurture and growth of the other. The deaf world has a beauty, a richness and a vibrancy which is at least equal to that of the hearing world, and certainly complementary to it. Ours is a silence laden with the sound of visual observation, awareness of space, texture, taste, touch and smell. For us, these grant and define our existence in their capacity to inform us of our environment and where we stand in relation to it. Yet our world, which could so easily be a haven of peace, is a world which is constantly under threat from the plague of sound and the flood of denial, and

ravaged by the poverty of ignorance. The potential for peace becomes both a Deaf Challenge to the dominance of hearing experience, and a reason for denial as it is twisted by labels such as 'impairment', 'handicap' and experiential 'impoverishment

This book is aimed primarily at those who think they know deaf people better than they know themselves, but it will hopefully be of interest to anyone, deaf or hearing who has contact with deaf people. It is not about clinical settings or patients or about deafness, but about two people in a unique relationship — the counsellor and the deaf client, striving for mutual understanding and deaf empowerment. For the task of this book, and therefore the task of the reader, is a quest for empowerment of the deaf consciousness, and a recognition of the phoenix rising from the ashes, the symbol of The Deaf Challenge and of deaf humanity. In the act of writing this book, I am inviting the reader to experience the essence of that consciousness in the space created by these pages. It is entirely appropriate, in the realms of feeling, that the words of this book should be conveyed in this way. It is a way which is symbolic of both the quality of my silence and of the human need for safety, both yours and mine, when the going gets tough. The words of this book are not easy words to accept or perhaps even to understand, and they may incite the kind of 'trouble' that Dorothy Rowe refers to, but they do not carry a hollow message.

African American Children Still Suffer from a Negative Self-Image

Hazel Trice Edney

Hazel Trice Edney is a veteran journalist who for ten years served as editor in chief of the National Newspaper Publishers Association News Services. In 2010 Edney launched the Trice Edney News Wire, a syndication service carrying items of special interest to the approximately one thousand black-owned or black-oriented newspapers in the United States.

In the following selection Edney reports the findings of young filmmaker Kiri Davis. Noting how her high-school-aged friends often voiced frustrations as they struggled to resolve the inherent conflicts between media images of what constituted beauty and their own appearances, Davis chose to reenact the famous 1950 "doll test" of social researcher Kenneth Clark that was used by NAACP lawyer Thurgood Marshall to successfully demonstrate to the US Supreme Court how damaging school segregation was to young children. Despite more than half a century of progress in race relations, Davis found that almost exactly the same proportion of modern African American preschoolers preferred white dolls and called dark-skinned dolls "bad" or "ugly."

The reassuring female voice asks the child a question: "Can You show me the doll that looks bad?" The child, a preschool-aged Black girl, quickly picks up and shows the Black doll over a White one that is identical in every respect except complexion.

"And why does that look bad?"

Hazel Trice Edney, "New 'Doll Test' Produces Ugly Results," *The Final Call*, September 4, 2006. Copyright © 2006 by Hazel Trice Edney. All rights reserved. Reproduced by permission.

"Because she's Black;" the little girl answers emphatically. "And why is this the nice doll?" the voice continues. "Because she's White.

"And can you give me the doll that looks like you?"

The little girl hesitates for a split second before handing over the Black doll that she has just designated as the uglier one.

97

A Startling Wake-Up Call

This was not the 1954 doll test used by pioneering psychologist Kenneth Clark to help make the case for desegregation in the landmark *Brown v. Board of Education* Supreme Court decision that outlawed segregated public schools. Rather, it was a doll test

duplicated in Harlem, N.Y., last year [2005], more than a half-century after *Brown*. To the chagrin of parents and psychologists across the nation, the results were unchanged.

The test is again in the news because of an eight-minute documentary produced by 17-year-old film student Kiri Davis of Manhattan's Urban Academy who participates in the Reel Works Teen Filmmaking program, a free after-school program supported by cable network *HBO*.

The videotaped doll test resulted from a collection of writings Kiri had compiled on issues of importance to Black girls in her high school. In that writing, she noticed that complexion was a recurring theme.

"I knew what my friends were going through. These standards of beauty just kept coming up," she said in an interview with the *NNPA News Service*. "I thought it was an issue that needed to be exposed more, although at times it seemed too taboo to talk about. But I thought a film would just put it all out there and cause discussion."

The Original Doll Test of 1950

In realizing that so many dark-skinned girls have been told that lighter or Whiter skin is more beautiful, Kiri decided to drive home her point by conducting the doll study. The children are from a Harlem Day Care Center. And 15 of the 21 children surveyed preferred the White doll over the Black one.

Mr. Clark and his wife Mamie Phipps Clark, also a psychologist, conducted the doll study in 1950 that showed how racial segregation destroyed the self-esteem of Black children. The Clarendon County, S.C. experiment involved 16 Black children, ages 6 to 9. They asked the children their perception of a White doll and a Black doll. Eleven of the students said the Black doll looked "bad" and nine said the White doll looked "nice."



A seven-year-old girl shops for dolls at a store in Long Beach, California, 2011. In a test conducted in 2006, young African American children were given a white doll and a black doll and asked to choose the "nice one." Fifteen out of twenty-one chose the white doll. Marmaduke St. John/Alamy.

The test results influenced the U.S. Supreme Court to hold school segregation to be unconstitutional in the 1954 *Brown* case. Arguing against the "Separate but equal" doctrine in 1952, Thurgood Marshall, then an attorney for the NAACP Legal Defense and

Educational Fund, cited Mr. Clark's work as proof of the doctrine's damage to the self-image of Black children. On May 17, 1954, Supreme Court Chief Justice Earl Warren announced the court's decision to desegregate schools in *Brown v. Board of Education*. Mr. Clark's doll test was one of his citations as proof of the psychological damage on Black children.

No Change in Self-Image

The Davis test shows that psychology has not changed very much at all.

"I'm really not shocked, I am sad to say;" says Julia Hare, a San Francisco psychologist. "If you keep doing what you have always done, you're going to keep getting what you have always had. Our children are bombarded with images every day that they see on television screens and on coffee tables—either the light-skinned female that everybody is pushing or they give preference to the closest to White images:'

Kiri's film also features brief interviews with four teens who object to having been stereotyped as less intelligent or uglier simply because they do not meet the expectations of advertisers' perceived standards of beauty.

That White-is-right image is also projected through music.

"Look at our rap artists and entertainers, and not just the Lil' Kims and the Beyonces," opines Ms. Hare. "Their skin is getting lighter and lighter and they're getting blonder and blonder."

Gail Wyatt, professor of Clinical psychiatry at the University of California at Los Angeles, says she would recommend to any parent to instill racial pride into their children well before pre-school.

"Youngsters come into their homes making disparaging remarks about being brown or African-descended or about nappy hair;" says Prof. Wyatt. "It is a definite concern of any parent. We want to know how our children can grow up in their own skin. We can't leave that part of a child's development to the school system or the neighborhood."

Instilling Racial Pride in Children

Children should be socialized between the ages of 2-4 to understand culture and skin color, Prof. Wyatt says. "They should be taught a concept of beauty and a context of ancestry."

Kiri's mother, Ursula Davis, an education consultant, says educating her daughter and instilling pride about her heritage was a high priority around the home.

She says that when Kiri was in pre-kindergarten, enjoying the tales of Cinderella and Snow White, she once said out loud at school that she wanted to be a princess, too. A little friend, a Latino boy, quickly dispelled her dream. He told her she couldn't be a princess because she was Black and that only White girls were princesses. For a while, Kiri believed her little friend—but not for long.

"She grew up with African art around her. We took her to an exhibit in the Smithsonian

about Black women in Washington, D.C.," Ms. Davis recalls.

"She began to read voraciously about Black heritage and African American studies. She has immersed herself since she was very young and we have immersed her in the celebration of who she is."

And it has obviously paid off, as Kiri looks forward to a future in filmmaking that will also instill pride.

"I only want to make films that are about issues that are of importance to me, films that don't show the stereotypes;" Kiri shares.

Hollywood's Role

Some parents say their children are bombarded with countless negative images each day and that it takes a special effort to compete with those images.

"I make sure I know what they see and what they watch on television. And many times, we are watching things together," says Alethea Holland, a Washington, D.C. mother of three daughters ages 7, 9 and 15. "And I give them each a mirror and I try to make them look in the mirror and appreciate their beauty and I make sure that they hear what I say; not what other people say, especially at school?"

Sandra Cox, director of the Coalition of Mental Health Professionals in Los Angeles and a past president of the Association of Black Psychologists, says the short film clip may have understated the problem.

"I believe if any of us out here [on the West Coast] were to do the same study, it would be still worse;" she says. "Hollywood created the standard."

Minority Stress

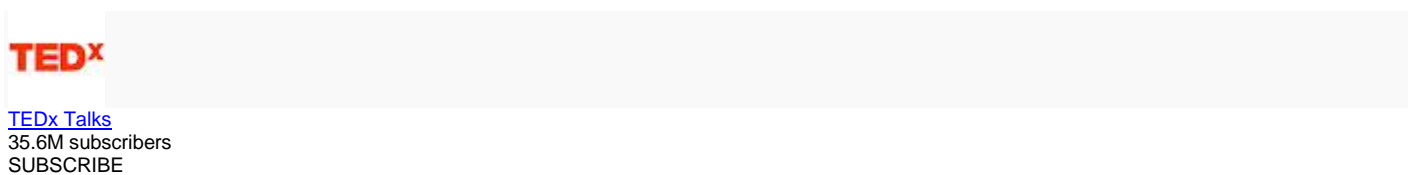
https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Minority_stress

Minority stress describes high levels of [stress](#) faced by members of stigmatized minority groups.^[1] It may be caused by a number of factors, including poor [social support](#) and low [socioeconomic status](#); well understood causes of minority stress are interpersonal [prejudice](#) and [discrimination](#).^{[2][3]} Indeed, numerous scientific studies have shown that when minority individuals experience a high degree of prejudice, this can cause stress responses (e.g., high blood pressure, anxiety) that accrue over time, eventually leading to poor mental and physical health.^{[1][3][4][5]} Minority stress theory summarizes these scientific studies to explain how difficult social situations lead to [chronic stress](#) and poor health among minority individuals.

Addiction: A Story of Stigma, A Story of Hope | Scott McFadden | TEDxColoradoSprings

90,250 views
Jan 9, 2020

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=HHiN7JftdcY>



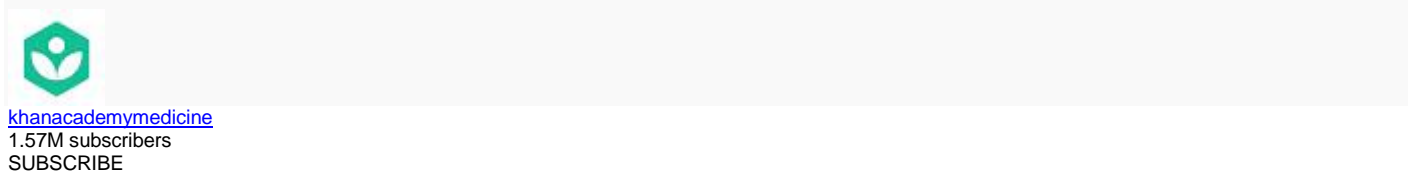
Scott McFadden is a Licensed Addictions Counselor, who also identifies as a person in long term recovery from heroin and other drugs. He shares a harrowing story of incarceration and a long journey to recovery while explaining the dynamics of addiction and the labels, shame, and stigma which have become the greatest obstacles to turning around the opioid epidemic. He shows us the need to talk to one another to overcome the secret places where shame resides. This is a story of vulnerability and hope! Scott McFadden, a Licensed Addictions Counselor and Licensed Professional Counselor, has worked in the mental health treatment field for ten years, in roles as varied as therapist, clinical director, executive director, and member of the National Assn of Drug Court Professionals. He has both personal and professional experience with Medication Assisted Treatment and volunteers on the steering committee of the Coalition for the Prevention, Addiction Education and Recovery in Colorado Springs. This talk was given at a TEDx event using the TED conference format but independently organized by a local community. Learn more at <https://www.ted.com/tedx>

Stigma - Social and self | Individuals and Society | MCAT | Khan Academy

114,227 views
Jan 23, 2015

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=_jz7yo7L3Z0

7 minutes 15 seconds



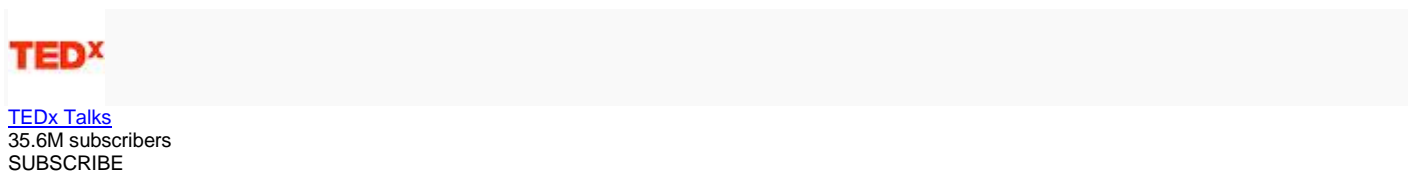
Created by Arshya Vahabzadeh. Watch the next lesson: <https://www.khanacademy.org/test-prep...> Missed the previous lesson? <https://www.khanacademy.org/test-prep...> MCAT on Khan Academy: Go ahead and practice some passage-based questions! About Khan Academy: Khan Academy offers practice exercises,

instructional videos, and a personalized learning dashboard that empower learners to study at their own pace in and outside of the classroom. We tackle math, science, computer programming, history, art history, economics, and more. Our math missions guide learners from kindergarten to calculus using state-of-the-art, adaptive technology that identifies strengths and learning gaps. We've also partnered with institutions like NASA, The Museum of Modern Art, The California Academy of Sciences, and MIT to offer specialized content. For free. For everyone. Forever. [#YouCanLearnAnything](#) Subscribe to Khan Academy's MCAT channel: <https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCDkK...> Subscribe to Khan Academy: https://www.youtube.com/subscription_...

The Journey from Self-stigma to Self-worth | Nadine Ferris France | TEDxChiangMai

6,954 views
Oct 1, 2019

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=It8SZbLIAYw>



"การเดินทางจากการลดคุณค่าตนเองสู่การเห็นคุณค่าตนเอง" Holding a master's degree in global health, Nadine is a social entrepreneur, communicator, writer, trainer, facilitator and civil society activist with over 25 years' experience in health, HIV, education and gender matters. She works with the United Nations, with non-governmental organizations, universities and individuals. Founder of The Work for Change, she is particularly passionate about the power of self-stigma and shame and has carried out research and designed programs that strive to understand the beliefs and thoughts that cause self-stigma across many countries in Asia and Africa. She works with young people, people living with HIV, survivors of gender-based violence and sex workers. After residing and working in Thailand for 12 years, she now lives with her two Chiang-Mai born children in Ireland, where she is the Executive Director of the Irish Forum for Global Health. She is a certified facilitator of the work of Byron Katie and an executive and life coach.

www.theworkforchange.org นาดีนจบการศึกษาระดับปริญญาโทด้านสาธารณสุขโลก

เธอมีหลากหลายบทบาทด้วยกัน ไม่ว่าจะเป็นผู้ประกอบการเพื่อสังคม นักสื่อสาร นักเขียน ผู้ฝึกสอน

และนักทรงค้ำด้านสังคม ซึ่งเธอมีประสบการณ์มากกว่า 25 ปีในด้านสุขภาพ เอชไอวี/เอดส์ วัฒนธรรม

การศึกษาและเรื่องเพศ โดยเธอได้ร่วมงานกับสถาบันต่างๆ อันได้แก่ องค์การสหประชาชาติ องค์การเอ็นจีโอ

สถาบันอุดมศึกษา รวมถึงบุคคลทั่วไป นาดีนยังเป็นผู้ก่อตั้ง "The Work of Change"

ซึ่งเธอมีความสนใจเป็นพิเศษเกี่ยวกับผลกระทบจากการตีตราตัวเองและความละเอียดอ่อนที่ตนเองเป็น โดยเธอก็ได้ทำการศึกษาและคิดค้นแนวทางเพื่อทำความเข้าใจในเรื่องของความเชื่อและแนวคิดอันเป็นต้นเหตุของการตีตราตัวเองที่สามารถพบได้ในหลายประเทศทั้งในแถบเอเชียและแถบแอฟริกา

โดยเธอได้ทำงานร่วมกับเยาวชน ผู้ติดเชื้อเอชไอวี ผู้เคยเป็นเหยื่อความรุนแรงทางเพศ และผู้ค้าบริการทางเพศ

Holding a master's degree in global health, Nadine is a social entrepreneur, communicator, writer, trainer, facilitator and civil society activist with over 25 years' experience in health, HIV, education and gender matters. She works with the United Nations, with non-governmental organizations, universities and individuals. Founder of The Work for Change, she is particularly passionate about the power of self-stigma and shame and has carried out research and designed programs that strive to understand the beliefs and thoughts that cause self-stigma across many countries in Asia and Africa. She works with young people, people living with HIV, survivors of gender-based violence and sex workers. After residing and working in Thailand for 12 years, she now lives with her two Chiang-Mai born children in Ireland, where she is the Executive Director of the Irish Forum for Global Health. She is a certified facilitator of the work of Byron

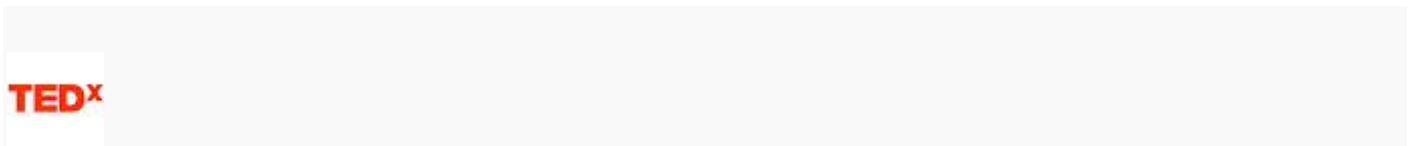
Katie and an executive and life coach. This talk was given at a TEDx event using the TED conference format but independently organized by a local community. Learn more at <https://www.ted.com/tedx>

Removing the Stigma of Disability | Adam Pearson | TEDxBrighton

21,519 views
Mar 24, 2017

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=aOmtAJkzZbk>

Adam has a severe facial deformity and speaks confidently



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Adam will share important lessons he has learned while carving out a career for himself in the public eye, whilst overcoming the stigma attached to his disfigurements. Adam Pearson is a Presenter, Actor and University of Brighton 2016 Alumnus of the Year. With a passion for story telling and exploring the world around him Adam firmly believes that every human has a duty to leave this world in a better state than when they arrived in it by leaving an impact on the world and, by the same token, letting this world impact us. Life is 10% what happens to you and 90% how you decide to handle it! This talk was given at a TEDx event using the TED conference format but independently organized by a local community. Learn more at <http://ted.com/tedx>

Troy's Story : Removing the Stigma about Discussing Suicide | Saprina Schueller | TEDxCoeurdalene

36,297 views
Mar 20, 2020

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=79hgDk_emE0



On March 21, 2018 beloved high school principal, Troy Schueller, unexpectedly committed suicide. In the hopes of removing the stigma surrounding suicide and to open up the conversation about mental health, Troy's family decided to share his story through a social media campaign by creating the web site troysstory.com. After 85,000 people visited the site within 48 hours, the family continues to promote social and cultural changes surrounding the issues that led to his death. Saprina Schueller has been a middle school language arts / social studies teacher for 19 years and has grown up and lived in North Idaho for her entire life. On March 21, 2018, the community of Coeur d'Alene was shocked and saddened by the news that beloved high school principal and Saprina's husband, Troy Schueller, had committed suicide. Following the loss of her best friend and husband, Saprina struggled to put together the pieces of the puzzle that led to Troy's death and to rebuild her life for herself, her children, and grandchildren. After eighteen months and at the encouragement of her therapist, she wrote a blog post called "Troy's Story" in an effort to "accept" her loss. Saprina now uses her experience to bring about much needed social change in the areas of suicide awareness, concussions, CTE, opioid addictions, privacy laws, and mental health. To learn more, visit Troysstory.com, and join the movement to remove the stigma about talking about mental health and suicide. This talk was given at a TEDx event using the TED conference format but independently organized by a local community. Learn more at <https://www.ted.com/tedx>

The red umbrella -- sex work, stigma, & the law | Maggie de Vries | TEDxSFU

45,399 views

Nov 25, 2014

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=RUfcouJch7U>

TEDx

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This talk was given at a local TEDx event, produced independently of the TED Conferences. In 1998, Maggie's sister Sarah disappeared from the corner of Princess and Hastings in Vancouver's downtown eastside. Sarah's disappearance forced Maggie to come to terms with the life Sarah lived. Maggie spoke out during the investigation into the missing women. She took part in the public inquiry. She wrote two books rooted in Sarah's life: a memoir, Missing Sarah, and a novel, Rabbit Ears. She served on the board of PACE Society (Prostitution, Advocacy, Counseling and Education) and ran a book club for downtown eastside women. Now, she is once again listening to sex workers, gathering insights and stories to add dimension to what she learned from her sister, hoping to diminish the stigma that pushes sex workers onto society's margins.

Trained not to cry: the challenge of being a soldier | Richard Doss | TEDxNaperville

1,104,956 views



[TEDx Talks](#)

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Members and Veterans of the US Armed Forces have unacceptably high suicide rates. Why? It's not the combat experience like one would suggest, but a much more complex issue that needs to be talked about. Dr. Richard Doss is a Licensed Clinical Psychologist and works for the Veterans Administration Vet Center. He is also a former Department of Defense Suicide Prevention Program Manager for the United States Army Reserve, training commanders, soldiers, and their families on suicide prevention and assisting over 13,000 soldiers in 26 states and Puerto Rico. Certified in Applied Suicide Intervention Skills Training (ASIST), Richard has trained hundreds of Soldiers and their families in the art of Suicide Awareness and Suicide Prevention. This talk was given at a TEDx event using the TED conference format but independently organized by a local community. Learn more at <http://ted.com/tedx>

Mental Health Stigma and the Cult of Positivity | Rachel Tambling | TEDxUConn

3,126 views

Oct 23, 2020

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=WCKmKZhmadS>



[TEDx Talks](#)

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In this TEDx talk, Dr. Rachel Tambling discusses the contribution of toxic positivity to mental health stigma. Stigma, including internalized stigma, is one of the most frequently reported barriers to seeking help for mental health and substance use concerns. Toxic positivity, and the cult of positivity in social media contributes to stigmatization of mental health challenges. Dr. Tambling is an Associate Professor in the Department of Human Development and Family Science at the University of Connecticut and a licensed Marital and Family Therapist. Dr. Tambling's research is centered on intervention and service utilization in behavioral health. She is specifically interested in treatment initiation, client engagement, and client processes of change during psychotherapy. Dr. Tambling is also interested in health equity, and explores ways to address barriers to health equity, including expanding the availability of couple and family therapy, and understanding the complex components of effective engagement and change during therapy. Dr. Tambling is also the Editor-in-Chief of Contemporary Family Therapy. This talk was given at a TEDx event using the TED conference format but independently organized by a local community. Learn more at <https://www.ted.com/tedx>

Strategies for Coping With Social Stigma

484 views
Jul 23, 2021

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=BpQ6pGt40PM>

Excellent ?????



[Daniel Storage](#)
10.7K subscribers
SUBSCRIBE

Thus far, we've focused almost exclusively on the perspective of the biased person—that is, on the person who has stereotyped, is being prejudiced, or discriminates. Now, however, we'll consider the perspective and the experience of the person who is experiencing prejudice, and we'll think about ways to cope while experiencing prejudice. Social Stigma: The experience of being socially discredited or being perceived as flawed by a trait or characteristic. Stigma Management: Strategies (at the individual-level) for coping with stigma. Withdrawal: The tendency to avoid people who treat a stigmatized person stereotypically; a strategy for managing stigma by gaining social acceptance. Passing: Methods and strategies for concealing one's stigmatizing attribute or condition from others; a strategy for managing stigma by gaining social acceptance. Visibility: Refers to how visibly obvious (vs. concealable) an attribute, condition, or status is. Self-Promotion: Showing other people that you are multi-dimensional and competent in several areas; a strategy for managing stigma by gaining social acceptance. Compensation: Deliberately presenting to others behavior that contradicts the assumptions held about your abilities or character; a strategy for managing stigma by gaining social acceptance. Attributing Negative Outcomes to Prejudice: Discounting some failure or negative evaluation by recognizing the possibility that it may have been the result of prejudice; a strategy for managing stigma by protecting psychological well-being. Devaluing Negative Outcome Dimensions: Choosing to care less about the attribute, status, or condition that tends to be targeted by prejudice; a strategy for managing stigma by protecting psychological well-being. Self-Affirmation: Rebuilding self-worth when threatened by focusing on an important, positive aspect of one's self-concept that has not been threatened; a strategy for managing stigma by protecting psychological well-being. Virtual Identity: Identities that other people see or assume of you. Actual Identity: Identities that you see in yourself or actually have. Mindfulness: A technique that shifts the focus to engaging and responding to, rather than disengaging and trying to escape from, people's thoughts and reactions to stigma; a strategy for managing stigma by protecting psychological well-being. Self-Stigma: Internalizing others' negative assumptions about oneself.

How Can We End Stigma And Abuse Against People With Disabilities | Shantha Rau Barriga |

TEDxGateway

6,140 views

Jun 2, 2020

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=2lpXwBI-2Zg>



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Shantha Rau Barriga shares her first-hand experiences documenting some of the worst human rights crimes: the shackling and deliberate isolation of people with disabilities. “If I hadn’t seen it with my own eyes, I would not believe such inhumanity is possible.” By sharing the stories of people hidden away and pressuring policymakers to act, we’re starting to change people’s lives. Shantha calls each of us to work together and [#BreakTheChains](#) of stigma and violence - and include people with disabilities in our communities. Shantha Rau Barriga is an expert in international disability rights and has documented human rights abuses against people with disabilities in more than a dozen countries around the world. She is the founding director of the disability rights division at Human Rights Watch, leading research and advocacy to bring the voices of people with disabilities to policymakers and the media, in partnership with organizations of people with disabilities. This work has led to concrete changes in policies and perceptions. In particular, she has documented the shackling of people with psychosocial disabilities, denial of education for children with disabilities, violence against women and girls with disabilities, the institutionalization of children and adults with disabilities, and the neglect of people with disabilities in humanitarian emergencies. This talk was given at a TEDx event using the TED conference format but independently organized by a local community. Learn more at <https://www.ted.com/tedx>

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How to Overcome Negative Period Stigma | Eva Bonnier | TEDxYouth@CanadianAcademy

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Eva Bonnier, a sophomore at Canadian Academy, is inspired to make change and overcome negative period stigma. Working with her school's social justice group, URCA, she learned about the discriminatory culture surrounding menstruation. Specifically, Eva conducted a survey for those who menstruate at her school where she found shocking statistics and personal experiences that those around her have dealt with, therefore she became motivated and eager to spread awareness on this topic. In her speech, Eva informs the audience on negative period stigma and suggests three ways to overcome it, which include having open discussions, teaching about menstruation, and making products accessible. Through this, she aims to help create a more inclusive environment, bringing a positive emotional impact on everyone who menstruates. Eva Bonnier, a sophomore at Canadian Academy, is inspired to make change and overcome negative period stigma. Working with her school's social justice group, URCA, she learned about the discriminatory culture surrounding menstruation. Specifically, Eva conducted a survey for those who menstruate at her school where she found shocking statistics and personal experiences that those around her have dealt with, therefore she became motivated and eager to spread awareness on this topic. In her speech, Eva informs the audience on negative period stigma and suggests three ways to overcome it, which include having open discussions, teaching about menstruation, and making products accessible. Through this, she aims to help create a more inclusive environment, bringing a positive emotional impact on everyone who menstruates. This talk was given at a TEDx event using the TED conference format but independently organized by a local community. Learn more at <https://www.ted.com/tedx>

Theoretical development

Emergence

Over the past three decades, social scientists have found that minority individuals suffer from mental and physical [health disparities](#) compared to their peers in majority groups. This research has focused primarily on racial and sexual minorities. For example, African Americans have been found to suffer elevated rates

of [hypertension](#) compared to Whites.^[6] Lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender and queer (LGBTQ+) individuals face higher rates of [suicide](#), [substance abuse](#), and [cancer](#) relative to non-queer people.^{[7][8][9]}

Social selection hypothesis

One causal explanation for minority health disparities is the social selection hypothesis, which holds that there is something inherent to being in a minority group (e.g., [genetics](#)) that makes individuals susceptible to health problems.^{[10][11]} In general, this view has not been supported by [empirical](#) research. If minority individuals were genetically predisposed to poor health outcomes, the vast majority of them should face health disparities. However, large-scale empirical studies have shown that most of LGBTQ+ individuals do not suffer [psychopathology](#) and that many African Americans do not have heart disease.^{[6][12]} Instead, research suggests that environmental factors explain minority health disparities better than do genetic factors.^{[13][14]} While the social selection hypothesis is still debated, it is clear that genetic and dispositional factors do not fully explain the health disparities observed in minority groups.

Social causation hypothesis

A second hypothesis regarding the causes of minority health disparities suggests that minority group members face difficult social situations that lead to poor health.^[11] This hypothesis has received broad empirical support.^[4] Indeed, social psychologists have long recognized that minority individuals have different social experiences compared to majority individuals, including prejudice and discrimination, unequal socioeconomic status, and limited access to health care.^{[15][16]} According to the social causation hypothesis, such difficult social experiences explain health differences between minority and majority individuals.^{[11][4]}

Overview of minority stress theory

Minority stress theory extends the social causation hypothesis by suggesting that social situations do not lead directly to poor health for minority individuals, but that difficult social situations cause stress for minority individuals, which accrues over time, resulting in long-term health deficits.^{[17][11][18]} Furthermore, minority stress theory distinguishes between distal and proximal stress processes.^[4] Distal stress processes are external to the minority individual, including experiences with rejection, prejudice, and discrimination. Proximal stress processes are internal, and are often the byproduct of distal stressors; they include concealment of one's minority identity, vigilance and anxiety about prejudice, and negative feelings about one's own minority group. Together, distal and proximal stressors accrue over time, leading to chronically high levels of stress that cause poor health outcomes. Thus, minority stress theory has three primary tenets:

Minority status leads to increased exposure to distal stressors.

Minority status leads to increased exposure to proximal stressors, due to distal stressors.

Minority individuals suffer adverse health outcomes, which are caused by exposure to proximal and distal stressors.

These three tenets of the minority stress theory have been tested in over 134 empirical studies, most of which examined racial and sexual minority populations.^[3] Generally, the studies have confirmed that difficult social situations are associated with stress among minority individuals, and that minority stress helps to explain health disparities.

Evidence of key concepts

Minority status and distal stressors

The first tenet of minority stress theory holds that being in a minority group is associated with increased exposure to distal stressors, such as prejudice and discrimination. Indeed, despite significant improvement over the past several decades, numerous studies have confirmed that minority individuals continue to face high rates of distal stressors.^[19] For example, in large-scale national surveys, LGBTQ+ individuals report high rates of prejudice and discrimination across the lifespan.^{[20][21][22]} One survey found that one-fourth of LGB adults have experienced [victimization](#) related to their sexual orientation, and another found that as many as 90% of LGBTQ+ youth report hearing prejudiced remarks at school.^{[23][24]} Similarly, up to 60% of African Americans report experiencing distal stressors throughout their lives, ranging from [social rejection](#) at school to [housing discrimination](#) and [employment discrimination](#).^{[25][26][27][28]} In one study, 37 African American respondents recalled

over 100 discrete experiences with racist prejudice in a two-year period.^[29] In another study, 98% of Black participants reported experiencing at least one incidence of prejudice in the past year.^[30]

Rates of exposure to distal stressors are much higher among racial and sexual minorities than among majority individuals. For example, LGBTQ+ adults are twice as likely to recall experiencing prejudice throughout their lives compared to heterosexuals, and LGBTQ+ youth report significantly higher rates of prejudice and discrimination compared to their heterosexual and cisgender peers.^{[24][31][32]} In one carefully controlled study, researchers compared rates of victimization among LGBTQ+ youth and their heterosexual siblings, and they found significantly higher rates of abuse among the LGBTQ+ individuals.^[33] Comparing rates of perceived discrimination among African American and White individuals, researchers have found large differences in reports of discrimination: 30.9% of Whites reported experiencing "major discrimination" throughout their lives compared to 48.9% of African Americans. Similarly, 3.4% of Whites reported experiencing discrimination "often" in their lives, compared to 24.8% of African Americans.^[34] Thus, collectively, research suggests that minority individuals face frequent exposure to distal stressors compared to their majority group counterparts.^{[2][35][36]}

Minority status and proximal stressors

Proximal stressors are internal processes that are presumed to occur following exposure to distal stressors.^[4] Examples of proximal stressors include fear of rejection, [rumination \(psychology\)](#) on previous experiences with prejudice, and distaste for one's own minority group following a prejudice event.^{[1][18]} Most research on this topic focuses on either sexual minorities or African Americans, and it is unclear whether the proximal stress processes are conceptually similar between these two groups. Thus, it is necessary to review proximal stress processes separately for sexual minority and African American populations.

Proximal stressors among sexual minorities

A growing body of research indicates that exposure to distal stressors leads to proximal stressors in sexual minority populations. While sexual minority stress and gender minority stress both use Meyer's Minority Stress Model as a framework, and share some characteristics with gender minority stress, some researchers have suggested that sexual minority stress is distinct from the minority stress experienced by transgender, gender non-conforming, and non-binary-gender individuals.^[37] For example, LGBTQ+ youth and adults who have experienced prejudice about their sexual orientation sometimes choose to conceal their sexual identity from others.^{[38][39][40]} Concealing such personal information causes significant psychological distress, including intrusive thoughts about the secret, shame and guilt, anxiety, and isolation from other members of the minority group.^{[39][41][42][43]} Internalized [homophobia](#) is another proximal stressor prevalent among LGBT individuals. It refers to the internalization of negative social views about homosexuality, which leads to self-hatred and poor self-regard.^{[44][45]} As predicted by minority stress theory, internalized homophobia is associated with exposure to distal stressors, insofar as it only occurs because LGB individuals are exposed to negative societal attitudes toward same-sex attraction.^[46] Rejection sensitivity represents a third proximal stress among sexual minority individuals. [Rejection sensitivity](#) refers to chronic, anxious expectations of rejection based on one's stigmatized status. Among sexual minority individuals, rejection sensitivity emerges from experiences of rejection from parents and is associated with internalized homophobia, unassertiveness, depression, and anxiety.^{[47][48]} Thus, previous experiences with prejudice are associated with proximal stress among LGBTQ+ individuals, including concealment of their sexual identity, internalized homophobia, and rejection sensitivity.

Proximal stressors among gender minorities

In comparison to cis (non-transgender) individuals, [gender variant](#) minorities face a higher rate of distal stressors, including exclusion, verbal [trans bashing](#), as well as physical and sexual violence.^{[49][50][51]} The more distal stressors are sourced in family, friends, partners, neighbors, co-workers, acquaintances, strangers, and even the police, the more likely it is for gender variant people to experience proximal stress, including [internalized transphobia](#).^{[49][51][52]} Internalized transphobia may initially appear as anxiety and depression, marked by a severe decrease in self-tolerance or self-empathy, yet needs to be understood diagnostically within the context of minority stress.^[52]

Proximal stressors among African Americans

Among African Americans, proximal stressors were described by early social psychological theorists. For example, [Erving Goffman](#) observed that racial minorities approach social interactions with a high degree of anxiety, because they have been discriminated against in the past.^[53] Similarly, [Gordon Allport](#) asserted that African American individuals display vigilance after exposure to prejudice, actively scanning the social environment for potential threats.^[15] Such vigilance is presumed to be taxing, sapping emotional and cognitive energy from minority individuals and thus becoming stressful. Proximal stressors also have been demonstrated among African Americans in terms of [stereotype threat](#).^{[54][55]} Researchers have shown that, when African

Americans are reminded of their racial minority status in an academic context, they face a high degree of anxiety, causing their intellectual performance to suffer.^[55]

General proximal stressors among minority individuals

The proximal stress processes reviewed above are unique to specific minority groups; for example, internalized homophobia is a proximal stressor unique to LGBTQ+ individuals who experience prejudice about their sexual and/or gender orientation/identity, and vigilance against racism is unique to racial minorities who fear future experiences with race-based discrimination. It is also possible that more general psychological processes act as proximal stressors for minority individuals.^[56] For example, exposure to prejudice may lead to rumination, which is a common psychological phenomenon characterized by a maladaptive, repetitive, and obsessive focus on a past event that leads to depressive and anxious symptoms.^{[57][58]} Several studies have shown that distal stressors are associated with such general proximal stress processes among minority individuals. In one 2010 [longitudinal study](#), researchers found that [gay men](#) who experienced distal stressors related to their sexual orientation had an increased tendency to ruminate, which was associated with increased depressive and anxious symptoms compared to gay men who did not experience distal stressors.^[59] In another study from 2009, LGBT youth reported higher rates of rumination on days when they experienced distal stressors; rumination in turn was associated with psychological distress.^[60] Because minority individuals have been shown to face high rates of distal stressors compared to majority individuals, and because experiencing distal stressors is associated with general psychological stress processes such as rumination and anxiety, these findings highlight the more general ways in which prejudice and discrimination may affect internal stress processes among minority individuals.

Health outcomes

The bulk of minority stress research has examined the third tenet of the theory – namely, that distal and proximal stressors are associated with adverse health outcomes for minority individuals.^[61] These outcomes include both mental and physical health disparities, which differ across minority groups. Again, studies have yet to systematically determine whether minority stress is associated with different health outcomes among different minority groups. Thus, it is necessary to review associations between minority stress and health separately for LGBTQ+, African Americans, and immigrant groups, as social scientists do not know whether stress causes similar outcomes across groups. The [immigrant paradox](#) outlines health outcomes among immigrant populations.

Health outcomes among sexual minorities

LGBTQ+ individuals face higher rates of psychopathology compared to their non-LGBTQ+ peers. For example, population-based studies have shown that LGBTQ+ people are at risk for increased rates of substance abuse, suicide attempts, depression, and anxiety across the lifespan.^{[7][8][62][63][64][65]} In fact, one [meta analysis](#) found that LGBT individuals are 2.5 times more likely to have a lifetime history of mental disorder compared to heterosexuals, and 2 times more likely to have a current mental disorder.^[1] In terms of physical health, LGBTQ+ individuals are at heightened risks for some types of cancer and immune dysfunction.^[9]

Several studies have linked these negative health outcomes to distal stressors. For example, in a national survey, LGBT adults displayed higher rates of psychiatric morbidity and also reported significantly higher rates of prejudice and discrimination compared to their heterosexual peers; prejudice and discrimination fully explained the link between sexual orientation and psychiatric symptoms for LGBT respondents.^[31] In another study, level of peer victimization partially explained associations between sexual orientation and suicide risk.^[66] Perceived level of discrimination has also been shown to predict anxiety and substance abuse disorders among LGBTQ+ individuals.^{[23][67]} Multiple studies have also established an association between same-sex marriage legalization and reduced suicidality of youth and adolescents, indicating that the structural stigma embedded in denying equivalent rights to sexual minorities mediates part of the relationship between distal stressors and mental health.^{[68][69]}

Proximal stressors have also been linked to negative health outcomes for sexual minorities. For example, internalized homophobia has been linked to [self-harm](#) and [eating disorders](#) as well as sexual risk-taking behavior.^{[45][70]} Internalized homophobia has also been linked to general psychological distress, which predicts long-term mental health outcomes.^[23] Thus, both distal and proximal social stressors are associated with negative mental health outcomes among sexual minorities. A 2013 study suggests similar links between proximal stressors and physical health disparities in LGBTQ+ communities, including cardiovascular disease, asthma, diabetes, and some cancers.^[71]

Health outcomes among African Americans

[African Americans have been shown to suffer notable health disparities](#) compared to their White peers. For example, they suffer higher rates of morbidity due to [stroke](#), perinatal disease, and [diabetes mellitus](#) compared to Whites.^[72] They also suffer high rates of colorectal, pancreatic, and stomach cancers.^[72] In terms of mental health, African Americans report lower rates of overall [life satisfaction](#), as well as heightened depressive symptoms and substance abuse compared to Whites.^{[73][74]}

Distal stressors have been linked to these health disparities among African Americans. For example, one study showed that perceived prejudice was associated with irregular [blood pressure](#) throughout the day, which has been linked to long-term [cardiovascular disease](#).^{[75][76]} Exposure to racial prejudice has also been linked to negative health behaviors, such as [smoking](#) and [substance abuse](#), which are associated with poor cardiovascular health.^{[30][77]} Indeed, a 2009 meta analysis of 36 empirical studies revealed consistent effects of prejudice and discrimination on physical health (e.g., cardiovascular disease, hypertension, diabetes) among racial minorities.^[3] That same review revealed that racial prejudice and discrimination were related to depressive symptoms and psychiatric distress in 110 empirical studies.^[3] Individual studies have shown that reports of discrimination are associated with lower reports of happiness and life satisfaction, higher psychiatric distress, and depressive symptoms.^{[78][79][80]} Thus, exposure to distal stressors has been linked to poor mental and physical health outcomes for African Americans.

Other studies have linked proximal stressors and health outcomes for African Americans. For example, researchers have found that African Americans have a sense of inferiority and low self-worth due to experiences with prejudice, which are associated with emotional distress.^[81] Similarly, internalized racism has been linked to psychiatric symptoms, including high rates of alcohol consumption, low self-esteem, and depression.^{[82][83][84]} These findings corroborate the minority stress theory by demonstrating that proximal stressors are associated with health disparities among racial minorities. Non-Hispanic Whites are more than twice as likely to receive antidepressant prescription treatments as are Non-Hispanic Blacks. The death rate from suicide for African American men was almost four times that for African American women, in 2009. However, the suicide rate for African Americans is 60% lower than that of the Non-Hispanic White population. A report from the U.S. Surgeon General found that from 1980 - 1995, the suicide rate among African Americans ages 10 to 14 increased 233%, as compared to 120% of Non-Hispanic Whites.

Criticism and limitations

Despite multiple studies indicating that minority individuals face a high degree of stress related to their minority identity, and that minority stress is associated with poor health outcomes, there are several methodological limitations and ongoing debates on this topic.

First, the minority stress concept has been criticized as focusing too narrowly on the negative experiences of minority individuals and ignoring the unique [coping](#) strategies and [social support](#) structures available to them.^{[85][86]} While theoretical writings about minority stress do note the importance of coping mechanisms for minority individuals,^[1] individual studies that use minority stress theory tend to focus on negative health outcomes rather than on coping mechanisms. In the future, it will be important for researchers to consider both positive and negative aspects of minority group membership, examining whether and why one of those aspects outweighs the other in determining minority health outcomes.

Also, few studies have been able to test minority stress theory in full. Most studies have examined one of the three links described above, demonstrating that minority individuals face heightened rates of prejudice, that minority individuals face health disparities, or that prejudice is related to health disparities. Together, findings from these three areas corroborate minority stress theory, but a stronger test would examine all three parts in the same study. While there have been a few such studies,^[31] further replication is necessary to support the presumed pathways underlying minority stress.

Most studies of minority stress are correlational.^[3] While these studies have the advantage of using large, national datasets to establish links between minority status, stressors, and health, they cannot demonstrate [causality](#). That is, most of the existing research cannot prove that prejudice *causes* stress, which *causes* poor health outcomes among minority individuals, because [correlation does not imply causation](#). One way to remedy this limitation is to employ experimental and longitudinal research designs to test the impact of social stressors on health. Indeed, several studies from the 2000s made use of these more stringent tests of minority stress.^{[87][88]} Additional studies are needed to confidently state that prejudice causes poor health for minority individuals.

It is unclear whether different minority groups face different types of minority stress and different health outcomes following prejudice. Minority stress theory was originally developed to explain associations between social situations, stress, and health for LGB individuals.^[1] Still, researchers have used the same general theory to

examine stress processes among African Americans, and findings have generally converged with those from LGB populations. Thus, it is possible that minority stress applies broadly to members of diverse minority groups. However, studies have yet to directly compare experiences, stress responses, and health outcomes among individuals from diverse minority groups.^[3] Systematic comparisons are necessary to clarify whether minority stress applies to all minority individuals broadly, or whether different models are required for different groups.

[J. Michael Bailey](#), best known for his research on sexual orientation, argues that the minority stress model deserves reconsideration since it fails to take temperament and genetics into account. Bailey argues that there is a biological component to increased stress among non-heterosexual populations, and says that "it would be a shame—most of all for gay men and lesbians whose mental health is at stake—if sociopolitical concerns prevented researchers from conscientious consideration of any reasonable hypothesis".^[89]

Practical applications

Minority stress research has demonstrated that several specific processes are associated with minority health disparities. For example, existing studies highlight the differences between distal and proximal stressors, drawing attention both to socio-cultural factors (e.g., high rates of prejudice against minority individuals) and internal processes (e.g., rumination) that affect minority well-being. By separating the socio-cultural and individual aspects of minority stress, the theory suggests that practical interventions must occur at both the individual and social levels.^[18]

Social applications

On the societal level, minority stress research shows that prejudice and discrimination are common occurrences for minority individuals, and that they have damaging effects for individual well-being. This information has been used by law enforcement, policymakers, and social organizations to target and minimize the occurrence of distal stressors and, thus, to improve minority health on a large scale.^[18] For example, evidence that prejudice is associated with minority stress has been used in several [amicus curiae](#) briefs to settle important court cases regarding prejudice and discrimination against minority groups.^{[90][91]} Evidence that prejudice and discrimination are associated with minority stress that harms well-being for LGB individuals has also been invoked in the congressional debate about anti-harassment protection for LGB youth at the federal level.^[18] In the future, the minority stress concept can be used to advocate for federal funding for nationwide campaigns and interventions that aim to reduce intergroup prejudice. If successful, these programs may reduce the rate of distal stressors, significantly improving the mental and physical health of minority individuals.

Individual applications

On the individual level, minority stress research has uncovered differences in how minorities react to prejudice. For example, studies have shown that some individuals ruminate on experiences with prejudice, which is associated with anxiety and depression.^[59] Similarly, minority stress research has revealed that internalized stigma (i.e., distaste for one's own minority group) is associated with negative psychological outcomes. From these findings, clinicians have developed some interventions to decrease internalized stigma and improve well-being for minority individuals.^{[18][92]} When paired with structural interventions, these clinical applications for reducing minority stress may help to improve the pervasive health disparities observed in minority communities.^[18]

Expecting Rejection: Understanding Minority Stress Experiences of Transgender and Gender-Nonconforming

This article is written about Transgender and Gender Non-Conforming people. These general principles apply to many forms of prejudice, ranging from neuro-diverse or neuro-non-typical to hidden physical disabilities.

<https://www.liebertpub.com/doi/10.1089/trgh.2016.0012>

Abstract

Purpose:

Transgender and gender-nonconforming (TGNC) individuals often are the target of enacted or external (i.e., distal) experiences of stigma, discrimination, and violence, which are linked to adverse health, particularly psychological distress. There is limited research, however, examining felt or internal (i.e., proximal) stressors faced by TGNC individuals.

This study sought to examine one type of internal stressor, *expecting rejection*, and aimed to

(1) identify how and to what extent rejection expectations operate day-to-day for TGNC individuals and

(2) explore how TGNC individuals respond to expectations of rejection.

Methods:

In-depth interviews were conducted with 30 participants from 2014 to 2015 who identified as TGNC (mean age=30.4; 60% people of color); data were analyzed using a consensual qualitative research method.

Results:

Four thematic categories emerged about expecting rejection: (1) where to expect rejection; (2) thoughts and feelings associated with expectations of rejection; (3) coping strategies used to manage the expectation of rejection; and (4) the intersection of race and ethnicity with rejection expectations.

Conclusion:

Findings from this study suggest that expecting rejection is a frequent and salient internal stressor for TGNC individuals. We discuss the psychological and cumulative potential health impact of minority stress, and the applicability of Meyer's Minority Stress Model. Therapeutic interventions are needed to address the specific cognitive, emotional, and behavioral responses TGNC individuals experience as a result of the stress associated with expecting rejection, including fear, anxiety, and situational avoidance.

Introduction

Transgender and gender nonconforming (TGNC) individuals have a current gender identity or expression that differs from their assigned sex at birth. Although research investigations that focus specifically on the health and well-being of TGNC individuals remain limited, peer-reviewed published articles have documented the pervasiveness with which TGNC people face enacted experiences of stigma, discrimination, and victimization.¹⁻⁴ Prevalence estimates of discrimination among TGNC individuals are shown to be extraordinarily high, exceeding 60% in several published studies.^{5,6} Similarly, estimates for victimization are commonly greater than 40% for TGNC people.^{7,8} Emerging research also has highlighted an association between enacted stressors and indicators of negative mental and physical health. For example, TGNC individuals who reported having experienced physical or sexual abuse, compared to those who did not, are significantly more likely to report a history of suicidal ideation and suicide attempts.^{9,10} Likewise, experiences of gender-related discrimination are shown to be significantly associated with elevated levels of psychological distress for TGNC individuals.¹¹ Thus, enacted stressors appear to be detrimental to the health of TGNC individuals and continued and ongoing research, particularly longitudinal studies examining the relationship of such stressors to health over time, is needed.

Enacted stressors, however, represent only the *external* processes and experiences faced by TGNC individuals. TGNC individuals likely experience *internal* stressors and processes in response to these and other external stressors. Consistent with the theory and empirical research underlying Meyer's Minority Stress Model, internal or *proximal* stressors are considered more subjective and related to self-identity.¹²⁻¹⁵ According to the model, the three specific proximal stressors recognized are as follows: (1) identity concealment, (2) internalized stigma, and (3) expectations of rejection.

Expecting rejection—the focus of the present article—is described in the literature as a form of felt stigma, which is understood as an individual's knowledge of society's stance toward nonmajority individuals, and expectations regarding the likelihood of stigma being enacted in a given situation as a result of having a minority status, for example, for sexual and gender minority individuals.¹⁶ Notably, research has demonstrated that having a dual minority status (e.g., being a person of color who is also a sexual minority) can further complicate and heighten experiences of enacted stigma, which has implications for expecting rejection, especially among individuals who represent more than one marginalized identity.¹⁷

There is a moderate amount of published data to show how expecting rejection operates in the lives of cisgender (i.e., nontransgender or someone whose gender identity matches what is typically associated with someone of their sex assigned at birth) sexual minority individuals.¹⁸⁻²⁰ Yet, published research that demonstrates how expecting rejection is experienced by TGNC individuals remains scarce.

Based on a review of the extant literature, only a few published studies have empirically investigated how expecting rejection might operate in the lives of TGNC individuals. Bockting et al. surveyed 1,093 transgender individuals and found that the expectation of rejection (i.e., felt stigma) was positively associated with psychological distress, and negatively associated with levels of outness.¹¹ Gamarel et al. examined relationship stigma—real or anticipated feelings of negative judgment from others as a result of one's romantic relationship being socially devalued—among couples comprising cisgender men and transgender women.²¹ They found that higher levels of reported relationship stigma were associated with increased odds (adjusted odds ratio=1.13) of reporting clinically significant depressive distress.²¹

Thus, there is support for the notion that TGNC individuals might expect rejection specific to their gender identity, and preliminary data appear to support an association between expecting rejection and psychological distress.¹¹ However, the internal experience of expecting rejection is not well understood. Specifically, we do not know how TGNC individuals perceive and assign

meaning to this expectation and how they respond emotionally. Examining the internal process through which TGNC individuals might expect rejection would offer a more informed perspective regarding the noted association between experiences of stigma and adverse mental health, including implications for future points of therapeutic intervention.

Two recently published studies have also investigated variations of expecting rejection among TGNC individuals. In one study, investigators examined specific situations or environments that TGNC individuals might avoid, based on the fear of being outed against their wishes. With a sample of 889 TGNC individuals, 38.8% reported avoiding public restrooms, 38.4% reported avoiding gyms, 29.8% reported avoiding clothing shops, and 24.0% reported avoiding public transportation.²² Although these findings are helpful in identifying situations where TGNC individuals may expect rejection, they do not describe why or how the expectation might manifest, or how TGNC individuals may respond to the perceived threat. Increasing knowledge in this area would aid researchers in identifying how to target and effectively address areas perceived as unsafe (e.g., through stigma reduction interventions).

In the second study, investigators examined the association between employment status, coping strategies, and internalized transphobia and transgender stigma among 55 TGNC individuals.²³ The sample consisted of 24 transgender women (male-to-female), 20 transgender men (female-to-male), seven genderqueer or gender fluid individuals (who do not situate themselves within the gender binary), and four individuals who were either undecided or did not indicate their gender. The study demonstrated that higher levels of effective coping strategies (e.g., coping with work- and mental health-related stigma) were associated with lower levels of internal and external stigma. This study provides preliminary information about the role of coping in managing proximal stressors, particularly as a moderating variable, which is an important consideration because coping strategies related to proximal stressors for TGNC individuals are relatively unexplored and are a key component of Meyer's model that warrants further investigation.^{12,13}

Given the relative lack of investigations specific to the proximal stress experiences of TGNC individuals, and expecting rejection in particular, this study sought to comprehensively understand these experiences for TGNC individuals through in-depth interviews. Specifically, this study aimed to (1) identify how, and to what extent, expecting rejection operates day-to-day for TGNC individuals and (2) explore how TGNC individuals respond to expectations of rejection. Given the space constraints of a single article, we focus, in this study, on maladaptive or problematic coping strategies and experiences reported by the participants; we will present data on adaptive or resilient coping strategies in a separate article, to give that aspect of the participant's narratives the space they deserve.

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Qualitative results

Nine domains emerged following the consensual coding process (Table 2). Within the Expecting Rejection domain, there were four distinct categories:

- (1) where to expect rejection (with four subcategories);
- (2) thoughts and feelings associated with expecting rejection (with six subcategories);
- (3) coping strategies used to manage the expectation of rejection (with three subcategories); and
- (4) the intersection of race and ethnicity with expecting rejection (with two subcategories).

Categories and subcategories applying to only one case were excluded from the results. All domain categories and subcategories are presented in Table 3. Next, themes are presented and discussed with accompanying illustrative quotes, along with self-reported age, race/ethnicity, and gender identity of the participant who shared the quote.

Table 2. Domain List

1. Expecting rejection
2. Concealing or hiding gender identity
3. Passing
4. Negative social messages
5. Intersection of race/ethnicity and gender-related stress
6. General coping with gender-related stress
7. Sources of support
8. Resilience
9. Positive message to share with others

.....

Where to expect rejection

Could happen anytime when out in public spaces or when there is the potential to meet new people

Participants specified that they expected rejection anytime they left home and entered a public space. Examples of different public spaces included grocery stores, restaurants, and hotels.

Really, it could be anywhere, you know? Those kinds of situations pop up where you least expect them. I mean, they're going to happen where you do expect them—you know, when you're walking out on the street or going to the grocery store and that mother of four is looking at you like you're going to hurt her children just because you dress differently. But, you know, it could pop up at you and it just snaps you back to how unusual your situation is, and it takes away from just living life normally. (27, White, female/woman)

Notably, participants identified spaces that, historically, are regarded as transphobic, specifically, rural and conservative geographic areas, and religious settings. Yet, participants also explained that transindividuals might expect rejection in LGBTQ-identified spaces.

I would oddly say pride, and events where it's LGBT run or friendly. A lot of our gay brothers and sisters do not want to recognize that we are who we are, and so I choose to be stealth in those environments. I do notice that I get along with girls, just because that's my nature, but the lesbians seem very stand-offish. They don't want to make eye contact with me and I get it, but at the same time it's like, "You're missing out on the fundamental point here! I'm a part of this community and I should feel welcome in this community, but I'm not sometimes." (34, Black, male/man)

Overall, participants noted that expecting rejection in most environments is almost inevitable and a fundamental part of being TGNC identified.

There is the knowledge that you're going to walk into places and you will get treated differently; you will get looked at differently. It's not like it might not happen. It's not like it might happen. It's going to happen at least at some point every day. (40, White, gender fluid)

Oh, yes! Pretty much every day, every experience I go to, that [expecting rejection] is a big concern for me. (30, multiracial, male-to-female [MTF])

Could happen when around people who know me or with whom I plan to interact

Although participants frequently noted that they could reduce the stress associated with expecting rejection by avoiding specific places and contexts, they explained that certain contexts were not so easily avoided because they had ties to the people and the place. Most frequently, participants cited work/employment as a context in which they expect rejection.

It [expecting rejection] is why I am not at all out about my gender at work... There is no doubt that if I were open about being gender fluid, it would not only be the end of my career, but there would be a lot of personal repercussions as well... There's a definite fear that I could be found out at any time, and there's also anger—because it's dehumanizing. (40, White, gender fluid)

In addition, participants noted that family and people who knew the participants before they affirmed their gender were particular sources of internal stress.

Any time I'm in the presence of someone who knew me before—so, past family members, past friends, anybody like that—it's almost like every muscle in my body is in a heightened state of alert and my blood pressure, I can almost feel it pumping. Every word they say, every word they don't say, every flick of their eyes, everything they do is something that I'm focusing on and reading... So, constantly, I'm ready for them to say the wrong pronouns or use the wrong name, or speak to me in some negative way even if they haven't done it or aren't going to. Usually, by the time that situation is over, whether or not anything bad happened, I'll just burst into tears or just decompress emotionally after it's done because I'm so ready to be hurt, expecting to be hurt. (32, White, female/woman)

Could happen if or when I do not “pass” or “blend.”

Although representing a small proportion of the sample, several participants reported that they might expect rejection based on how well (or poorly) they “passed” or “blended” while in public. In presenting earlier in their gender affirmation process, or without the benefits of masculinizing or feminizing hormone therapy, participants perceived that others might react negatively more frequently.

When I first transitioned and didn't quite pass as well, I was worried about it [expecting rejection]. (25, Latino, MTF)

Anybody who's going through the transition, especially during the early phases, when you're getting “ma'am” half the time and “sir” half the time, you definitely notice stares... I don't deal with it so much anymore. I've been on hormones for the better part of a decade, so normally I don't have to worry about it too much. (31, White, MTF)

Thoughts and feelings associated with expecting rejection

Fearful, worried about safety, and hypervigilant

Participants reported that the expectation of rejection often is associated with distinct feelings of fear and worry for their personal safety. Nearly universally, participants shared a common concern for the possibility of being a target for discrimination and victimization as a result of their gender identity.

*I'm hypervigilant constantly. I think it's impossible really to be a trans female, and probably to be a trans male as well, and not be hypervigilant about what's going on around you—the people around you, and how they're acting and interacting with you and with each other, because violence creeps up on you really quickly and people are jerks. They're just f***ing a**holes and you never know when something is gonna happen, and so you always have to just be aware of what's going on. And it's a luxury that I think a lot of my cis friends don't realize they have, especially some of my White gay male friends. They don't get it that they can just walk around and not worry about being attacked or harassed. They always counter with, "Well, I got called a fag once." And I'm like, "Okay, yeah, once. Try that every day." (30, multiracial, MTF)*

In addition to the fear of violence and discrimination, participants also reported that they often were on alert or on guard, and ready to react to threats from others.

To get to work, I have to go to a bus stop that's a mile away, so I have to walk a mile alongside the highway. I walk down that every day, and there's a stretch where these creepy guys hang out, and sometimes they'll yell things at me and I get catcalled a lot, and that kind of makes me on edge. I think it's pretty unlikely anything bad would happen but I think if, say, someone groped me and realized I was transgender, I think that could end pretty badly. So, I'm a little more hypervigilant in that case. ...Usually, [when in this situation] I'm thinking about how fast I could run and I'll play out scenarios in my head. (25, Latino, MTF)

Anxious, stressed, and nervous

Every participant stated that they, to varying degrees, experienced anxiety and stress in association with the expectation of rejection. Participants described the internal stress as overwhelming, crushing, and awful.

So I recently went to a doctor in [home city] for the first time—nothing related to my transition at all, just a medical problem that I was having. Literally four or five hours before I went, I just felt really nervous or anxious about going there and just being like, "What if this happens? What if that happens?" Nothing happened. The doctor was really understanding, but it's just that preemptive stress, I guess. (25, multiracial, transsexual)

Physically and mentally exhausted by the end of the day

A marginal portion of participants shared that the process of managing the internal stress, over the course of the day and in different contexts, was physically and mentally taxing.

Well, there's definitely stress. Because you're constantly worried about everyone else and it's no wonder you have a hard time when you're constantly worried. So, yeah, there's worry, stress, and exhaustion. It's definitely tiring. (25, White, female/woman)

Depressed, self-loathing, and I am at fault

In addition to fear- and anxiety-based internal processes, participants also reported mood disturbances associated with the expectation of rejection. The primary experience centered on feelings of sadness and depression.

You feel like you're always on your guard and it's hard to get your hopes up about meeting someone new because, a lot of the time, they're going to act negatively without even getting to know you. So, it's depressing, in a way. And I think a lot trans people including myself, have dealt with depression, so it can be a little overwhelming. (31, multiracial, genderqueer)

In addition, participants detailed the ways in which they experienced feelings of shame and embarrassment, and negative thoughts about themselves.

It [expecting rejection] makes me sad. Like, I'm always going to be an alien—like an alien amongst friends. It's a lot of things like that. I tend to internalize a lot of stress and sadness, and wonder about myself rather than thinking so much about the people who stress me out. (32, White, female/woman)

Angry or frustrated with the situation and others

Although participants described the experience of expecting rejection generally as stressful and disheartening, they also voiced strong feelings of anger, frustration, and disappointment over the idea of expecting rejection from others.

There's a lot of anxiety and it's usually coupled with anger, which is maybe how I get through it. Like, if I have to use a public bathroom and I don't have another choice, I kind of get a little angry and it helps me to just do what I have to do. (26, Latino, masculine)

Notably, several participants expressed that expecting rejection, especially in retrospect, was sometimes a confusing process.

I honestly feel sorry for these people, that they can't just be open and accepting of everybody around them... I don't understand. I don't get why they feel a need to do this. (30, White, female/woman)

This was especially apparent when participants felt threatened or misunderstood by other minority populations (i.e., cisgender lesbian, gay, and bisexual) that, as the participants perceived, might experience similar minority stressors.

The gay community refuses to accept trans men and gender fluidity, and the lesbian community will sometimes become violent against trans women, and then they turn around and complain about the same things being done to them by the rest of society. It's like, "How can you cry about this when you're doing it to the rest of us?" (40, White, gender fluid)

Not supported, ignored, and rejected

Finally, participants additionally reported that, when experiencing the expectation of rejection, they sometimes believed that they were not supported by others and ignored.

I want to be treated like anybody else, so anticipating being an outsider isn't a great feeling. It's pretty upsetting, hoping that somebody would go up to bat for you, right? ... It's like the one kid

who gets punked on or bullied, and they kind of know that they're different, but hopes that other people will stand up for them, be nice to them, and fight for them, you know? (28, multiracial, male/man)

Some participants reported that they felt rejected by society.

I would get people that would look at me and talk to me like, "Is this freak really speaking to me?" instead of just talking to me like I'm a normal human being ... And I even experience that while being in the presence of my wife. People would speak to her and think that it wasn't important to speak to me, although I'm standing there next to her. (34, Black, male/man)

Coping strategies used to manage the expectation of rejection

Avoidance or escape

When expecting rejection and experiencing intense distress, participants stated that they frequently responded by engaging in avoidance strategies. Based on the participants' report, this occurred in two ways. First, participants reported that, if expecting rejection, they would avoid certain situations altogether.

Avoidance is a big thing that I do. I will avoid going to the doctor, even if I need to go to the doctor, or avoid going to the gym since I don't want to deal with locker room situations. (28, multiracial, FTM)

As a second method, participants noted that, if they did not have the immediate option to avoid the situation or were already in a potentially threatening setting, they used developed behavioral routines as a way to avoid becoming a target.

I usually try to hide in the [restroom] stall. I look around a lot when I'm inside and, if there's anyone in there, I try to hurry so they can't see me; or, I'll wait in there until there's no one else in the restroom and then rush out and wash my hands, and then escape. It's like, "I don't want to deal with this. I just want to go to the bathroom like a normal person and go on with my day," you know? (31, multiracial, genderqueer)

When I go to the gym, I always keep earphones in the entire time because I just don't want to hear what's going on around me. I don't look up—my eyes are always three feet in front of my feet—I don't talk to anyone, and I don't want to hear the comments. (40, White, gender fluid)

Intersections of race and ethnicity with expecting rejection

Being a person of color increases the expectation of rejection and helps you to prepare for the rejection

When asked to consider how the participant's race and ethnicity might impact their expectations of rejection, participants were clear in their general belief that being a person of color increases the risk for discrimination and violence. Others offered the notion that experiencing discrimination as a person of color helps prepare individuals to experience discrimination as a TGNC person.

There are definitely situations in which I might not even be thinking about my gender identity, but I'll expect to experience some form of discrimination or some sort of danger just based on my racial identity. (26, Latino, masculine)

I think the experiences that I had when I was young gave me a little bit of a thicker skin, and already taught me some things about diversity, and there's a wide array of responses to diversity. (34, multiracial, FTM)

Although participants of color readily detailed their own experiences of managing the internal stress associated with a dual minority status, White participants, given the frequency and detail of their responses, appeared to have little difficulty recognizing and acknowledging these same stressors.

I'm terrified of the threat of violence against me, knowing that if I'm ever raped that the chances of being beaten or murdered is way higher for me than others. But also knowing that it's not anywhere like it is for other girls who have darker skin than me. (32, White, female/woman)

Being White comes with privileges and decreases the expectation of rejection

Participants, quite commonly, discussed that being White comes with distinct social privileges and protections.

Well, I believe that I end up with White female privilege, which certainly has an advantage over, for example, being a woman of color. I know that I've had probably more opportunities than some women of color, especially some trans women of color that I know. (28, White, female/woman)

Notably, the notion of “passing” as White was salient to many participants, especially given that a large percentage of the sample was multiracial or multiethnic.

Every single trans person I know, who is a trans person of color, all of them have said that they're treated worse based on their race and being trans. So, I can only imagine that if I actually were perceived more regularly as a person of color, the discrimination that I would experience would be more so. (30, multiracial, MTF)

Discussion

This study aimed to assess the saliency of expecting rejection by identifying how, and to what extent, expecting rejection manifests in TGNC individuals, and further clarify how they might respond to the expectation of rejection. Through in-depth interviews, study findings offer evidence that proximal stress is a salient experience for TGNC individuals. Despite the significant heterogeneity present in the sample, in terms of the unique experiences of individuals from different geographical settings, different racial and ethnic backgrounds, at different points in their gender affirmation process, and at different ages, study findings converge in a stable narrative. This convergence is quite meaningful and provides strong support that expecting rejection is a common experience for TGNC individuals, especially given the frequency with which it was reported. In addition to frequency, the severity of the experiences that participants reported was profound.

Qualitatively, participant narratives were punctuated with a sense of urgency, distress, and resignation. In other words, they shared stories about expecting rejection in ways that suggested that the experiences were intense and often life-threatening (e.g., experiencing fear, anger, and hypervigilance); upsetting and disparaging (e.g., experiencing frustration, sadness, and shame);

and an expected part of their existence (e.g., thinking about the possibility of rejection in most contexts and with most people). Given these findings, it appears that the proximal stress experiences of TGNC individuals are consistent with the expecting rejection construct represented in Meyer's Minority Stress Model.^{12,13}

Furthermore, these findings offer evidence regarding the largely theoretical association between expecting rejection (or felt stigma) and psychological distress. Consistent with the few published studies that have found expecting rejection to be positively associated with elevated levels of psychological distress,^{11,21} the current qualitative study provides context for why and how distress might develop. Generally, participants reported that their proximal stress experiences were cognitively and emotionally distressing. As the narratives detailed, TGNC participants specifically reported fear and anxiety, sadness and anger, and mental exhaustion, and perceived that they were ignored and alone in their experiences.

Although qualitative studies are not designed to assess for directionality among constructs (i.e., internal stigma leading to psychological distress), nearly universally, the participants in this study reported narratives that offer evidence that proximal stressors appear associated with health and well-being. Future research using a quantitative methodology should further explore the association of these constructs in a larger sample.

Beyond experiences of depression and anxiety already reported in the literature (and implicated in this study), TGNC participants indicated that experiences of fear, worry, and hypervigilance were highly prevalent. Given that these fear-based responses are often observed in individuals with a trauma history, it is important to further assess to what extent proximal stressors might match the level of severity and impact of distal stressors. Intuitively, and consistent with published literature, one might assume that distal stressors such as discrimination and victimization are the primary factors that promote traumatic stress in TGNC individuals. Yet, these findings suggest that proximal stressors might operate similarly. In addition, many participants reported that they heard stories of violence and discrimination from TGNC peers, which could be a form of vicarious trauma.²⁶

From an intervention perspective, understanding the impact of internal stressors may inform clinical and public health approaches to trauma, which extends beyond what is happening to TGNC individuals that can be easily seen and measured (e.g., experiences of violence and discrimination), and focus on experiences that might be more covert and internalized (e.g., expecting and normalizing violence, or internalizing messages of shame and embarrassment).

Another consideration noted in the limited published literature is the use of avoidance strategies by TGNC individuals as a way to manage the expectation of rejection.^{22,23} Current findings are consistent with what has been previously reported. Generally, TGNC participants described situations that include gender markers or a clear gender binary system, that is, sex-segregated spaces, as being incredibly stressful, especially public restrooms. Although the fear of being outed was previously suggested as an indicator for why a TGNC individual might avoid situations,²² participants in this study detailed further concerns. Beyond simply being outed, participants expected confrontation (e.g., asked invasive questions or told that they were in the wrong restroom/locker room), harassment (e.g., catcalled or laughed at), discrimination (e.g., not welcomed at social events or differential treatment), and violence (e.g., physical and sexual assault). Therefore, avoidance strategies (i.e., situational avoidance) might actually represent an adaptive approach to mitigating proximal stress for TGNC individuals.

Although previous studies indicated the types of settings that TGNC individuals perceive as threatening,²² current study participants identified settings and also detailed ways in which they assessed for potential threats. Participants stated that they often thought about the experiences of

other TGNC individuals who reported discrimination or violence specific to a particular context (e.g., public restrooms, work settings, or bars and clubs). Based on this information, participants reported that they would consider the possibility of a similar aversive experience, were they to be in the same context. Other participants stated that they often were alert and on guard in certain situations, paid attention to their surroundings, and actively looked around and assessed how others were responding. A few participants reported that they would consider how easily they could escape a given situation, were there to be a potential threat. Thus, participants not only assessed for perceived and real threats to their safety and dignity but also, additionally, some rehearsed how they might react. Participant narratives, therefore, support Meyer's model regarding the manifestation of hypervigilance when expecting rejection for TGNC individuals.^{12,13}

Participants discussed strategies for managing the expectation of rejection when they could not avoid certain settings. Participants detailed routines that they developed to increase safety, including not making eye contact with others and remaining in restroom stalls for an extended period of time if someone was present and quickly exiting the space when no one was around. Other participants noted that they would enter certain settings with a friend to increase their sense of safety. In sum, the social interactions of participants appeared thoughtful, planned, deliberate, and skillful, reflecting the general stress associated with navigating social spaces as highly stigmatized and readily targeted individuals.

Notably, participants in this study discussed ways in which race and ethnicity intersected with the expectation of rejection. According to minority stress theory, it is possible for individuals to experience stressors specific to different minority identities.^{12,13} Therefore, individuals with multiple minority identities can, and likely, experience proximal stressors based on one of the minority identities or as a combination of several identities.

Accordingly, participants who were people of color stated that a dual minority status—specifically, being TGNC identified and a person of color—compounded the stress associated with expecting rejection. Participants of color readily discussed their experiences and perceived that expecting rejection (e.g., with the police, with employers, and when in unknown environments) was more frequent for them compared to White TGNC individuals. White participants noted similar discrepancies based on what they had seen and how their own treatment was differentiated. The reported stress of a dual minority status described by TGNC participants warrants further research and evaluation.

In addition, and perhaps as an indication of resilience (or as an unfortunate form of habituation to discrimination), participants of color frequently described that they were prepared for the possibility of gender-related rejection from others based on previous experiences of discrimination as a result of their race or ethnicity. Conversely, participants reported that being White or passing as White (as stated by several individuals of mixed race/ethnicity), brought many social privileges that reduced the expectation of rejection (e.g., being perceived as more valuable, more trustworthy, and not “standing out” when in public). Future research would benefit from exploring how a dual minority status might contribute to potential protective factors or enhance resilience when faced with stressful experiences. In addition, there is a need to understand how identity salience, as noted by Meyer,^{12,13} might impact the aforementioned. For example, research might investigate whether there are differences in the stress associated with racism depending on the salience of gender identity and/or stage of gender affirmation.

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Conclusion

This research represents one of the few studies designed to qualitatively investigate proximal stressors in TGNC individuals. These data demonstrate the extent to which expecting rejection might operate as a pervasive daily experience in the lives of TGNC individuals. Furthermore, this study provides evidence regarding the adverse impact of expecting rejection, as shown by the stressful cognitive and emotional responses reported by participants. Although emerging research has shown the deleterious impact of distal stressors (i.e., violence, discrimination, and stigma) on the health of TGNC individuals, the current finding demonstrate that proximal stressors likely have a similar devastating impact.

Given the frequency with which proximal stressors were reported by TGNC participants—and the reported experiences of fear, hypervigilance, sadness, and anger, in particular—there is a clear need and urgency to further evaluate the cumulative impact of the stress over time and identify future targets to intervene upon to mitigate potential harms. This is especially relevant given the current cultural climate in which TGNC individuals continue to remain targets for violence and discrimination—which has resulted in the murder of countless TGNC individuals worldwide, and the suicide of individuals who can no longer withstand the experience. Future research, including clinical intervention development and testing, should begin to prioritize the needs of this vulnerable population.

Racism Is Internalized in Modern America

Extract from Race in Black Like Me

Nadra Kareem Nittle

Nadra Kareem Nittle is a journalist who has written about race, immigration, education, and civil rights for many publications, including the Los Angeles Times, El Paso Times, Santa Fe Reporter, L.A. Watts Times, and the website Racialicious. She has headed the "Race Relations" section of About.com since 2010.

In the following article Nittle discusses the dimensions of internalized racism. Nittle observes that cultural messages are extremely powerful and often persuade minorities to see things from the perspective of the majority, even when that is not in that minority group's best interests.

Nittle specifically points out that, in the presence of clear and emphatically biased messages, members of minority groups may find themselves unconsciously adopting those views. This results in individuals who at once identify with their own ethno-racial subgroup and hold that group (including themselves) in poor regard.

Just what is internalized racism? One might describe it as a fancy term for a problem that's pretty easy to grasp. In a society where racial prejudice thrives in politics, communities, institutions and popular culture, it's difficult for racial minorities to avoid absorbing the racist messages that constantly bombard them.

Thus, even people of color sometimes adopt a white supremacist mindset that results in self-hatred and hatred of their respective racial group. Minorities suffering from internalized racism, for example, may loathe the physical characteristics that make them racially distinct such as skin color, hair texture or eye shape. Others may stereotype those from their racial group and refuse to associate with them. And some may outright identify as white. Overall, minorities suffering from internalized racism buy into the notion that whites are superior to people of color. Think of it as Stockholm Syndrome¹ in the racial sphere.

1. Stockholm syndrome is a psychological state noted in kidnapped persons and prisoners of war in which the captured person identifies with his or her captors even to the point of defending them and wanting to stay with them.

The Causes of Internalized Racism

While some minorities grew up in diverse communities where racial differences were appreciated, others felt rejected due to their skin color. Being bullied because of ethnic background and encountering harmful messages about race in greater society may be all it takes to get a person of color to begin loathing themselves. For some minorities, the impetus to turn racism inward occurs when they see whites receiving privileges denied to people of color.

"I don't want to live in the back. Why do we always have to live in the back?" a fair-skinned black character named Sarah Jane asks in the 1959 film *Imitation of Life*.

Sarah Jane ultimately decides to abandon her black mother and pass for white because she "wants to have a chance in life." She explains, "I don't want to have to come through back doors or feel lower than other people."

In the classic novel *Autobiography of an Ex-Colored Man*, the mixed-race protagonist first begins to experience internalized racism after he witnesses a white mob burn a black man alive. Rather than empathize with the victim, he chooses to identify with the mob. He explains:

I understood that it was not discouragement, or fear, or search for a larger field of action and opportunity, that was driving me out of the Negro race. I knew that it was shame, unbearable shame. Shame at being identified with a people that could with impunity be treated worse than animals.

Internalized Racism and Beauty

To live up to Western beauty standards, ethnic minorities suffering from internalized racism may attempt to alter their appearance to look more "white." For those of Asian descent, this could mean opting to have double eyelid surgery. For those of Jewish descent, this could mean having rhinoplasty.

For African-Americans, this could mean chemically straightening one's hair and weaving in extensions. In addition, people of color from a variety of backgrounds use bleaching creams to lighten their skin.

It's important to note, however, that not all people of color who alter their physical appearance do so to look "whiter." For example, many black women say they straighten their hair to make it more manageable and not because they're ashamed of

their heritage. Some people turn to bleaching creams to even out their skin tone and not because they're trying to uniformly lighten their skin.

Accusations of Internalized Racism

Over the years, a variety of derogatory terms have cropped up to describe those likely suffering from internalized racism. They include "Uncle Tom," "sellout," "pocho" or "whitewashed."

Also, a number of nicknames for those suffering from internalized racism involve foods that are dark on the outside and light on the inside such as Oreo for blacks; Twinkie or banana for Asians; coconut for Latinos; or apple for Native Americans. Such name-calling is offensive and insults those who may not experience racial self-hatred but don't fit into a box.

While such name-calling is hurtful, it persists. So, who might be called such a name? Multiracial golfer Tiger Woods has been accused of being a "sellout" because he identifies as "Cablinasian" rather than as black. Cablinasian is a name Woods devised to represent the fact that he has Caucasian, black, American Indian and Asian heritage.

Woods has not only been accused of suffering from internalized racism because of how he racially identifies but also because he's been romantically involved with a string of white women, including his Nordic wife [Elfin Nordegren, a Swedish model, who divorced Woods in 2010 following public revelation of his infidelity] . Some people view this as a sign that he's uncomfortable with being an ethnic minority.

Someone who refuses to date members of their own racial group may, in fact, suffer from internalized racism, but unless the person declares this to be true, it's best not to make any assumptions. In any case, children may be more likely to admit to suffering from internalized racism than adults. A child may openly yearn to be white, while an adult will likely keep such wishes to himself for fear of being judged.

Those who serially date whites or refuse to identify as an ethnic minority may be accused of suffering from internalized racism but so are people of color who espouse political beliefs considered detrimental to minorities. Conservative Supreme Court Justice Clarence Thomas and Ward Connerly, a Republican who's led the effort to strike down affirmative action in California and elsewhere, have been accused of being "Uncle Toms," or race traitors, due to their right-wing beliefs. Whites who associate mainly with people of color and politically assign themselves with minority groups have historically been accused of betraying their race as well. Whites active in the Civil Rights Movement were harassed and terrorized by other whites for seemingly "siding" with blacks.

Internalized Racism and Self-Esteem

It's impossible to tell if someone suffers from internalized racism simply based on their friends, romantic partners or political beliefs. But if you suspect that someone in your life suffers from internalized racism, try to talk with them about it. Ask them, for example, why they exclusively associate with whites, want to alter their physical appearance or downplay their racial background. Point out positives about their racial group and why they should be proud to be a person of color.

When Racism Makes Me Laugh By Its Utter Ridiculousness



[Rebecca Stevens A.](#)

Jul 17

<https://medium.com/illumination-curated/when-racism-makes-me-laugh-by-its-utter-ridiculousness-261862585101>

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Many of you that follow me have read about the random incidents of racism that I face in my everyday life. I often write about these experiences from a place of anxiety and anguish. I tell you how much it sucks to be a victim of racism.

Just the other day, I thought to myself, instead of absorbing random racism and allowing it to negatively impact my life as it does, why don't I just try to make fun of racists. I mean most of them are already insecure anyway, so if I just laugh at them right when they are being racist, it could frustrate them a bit more, and that way they get the emotional drawback of the situation, not me.

Now, let me make a small caveat here. I don't suggest laughing at law enforcement, over-zealous cops for example, that could end badly.

What I suggest is laughing at that customer service representative that ignores you when you enter a store, the cashier that makes it abundantly clear they don't want to touch your hand when handing over your change, or the air hostess who doesn't believe you are in business class. In these cases, instead of getting mad, I would suggest a big hearty laugh to process the trauma. My mixed-race daughter and I tried it again yesterday evening, and it was so therapeutic. Let me tell you what happened.

We both went out shopping. As I shared last week, the Summer sales are in full swing here and we thought we'd catch a few deals. We went to a cosmetics store. There was nail polish on sale and as we huddled around the small display basket in which they lay, a white store assistant came up and asked if we needed some help. We politely declined.

From the corner of my eye, I saw her go hide behind a stall. She was intently observing us with a growl on her face. She thought that I hadn't noticed her hiding behind the stall.

"I can't believe she is watching us thinking we might steal something", I whispered to my daughter.

“Where is she?”, my daughter responded.

“Hiding behind that stall right there. But don’t look back just yet. I mean didn’t we come here to steal a 10\$ bottle of purple nail vanish,” I joked.

My daughter looked at me and smiled, she knew that I was up to something.

“So how do you want to steal it?”, I said a tad bit loud, sure that the store assistant hidden behind the stall would hear.

I noticed as she craned her neck a little closer, intently listening to us plotting our robbery and get-away plan. She probably thought she was on to something too: catching those brown people right in the act. I mean, what else could a brown and Black person be doing in a store other than stealing? The stereotype that was firmly planted in her mind was an absolute reality for her, there was no question about that. My daughter and I kept up the act, meticulously plotting the theft of that bottle of purple paint. We were going to slip it into one of our shopping bags and then calmly walk out of the store.

The store assistant couldn’t seem to hide her excitement, I could see her as the racist that she was, already preparing the narrative for the police, for her family and friends. I could read it in bold letters in my mind: Black people are thieves, they cannot be trusted.

She had a smug look on her face, this was going to be her moment to confirm all those insidious stereotypes and validate the fact that she had always been right to follow all brown and Black customers around the store. This was that moment when like all racists, she was going to be able to prove her toxic point.

My daughter and I erupted into laughter as she squirmed behind that stall, feverish with excitement at the thought of catching us. I continued to speak louder, to plot the theft, as we cackled with laughter right by that display basket.

When we got tired, we simply walked out of the store. From the corner of my eye, I saw the store assistant rush to the basket, quickly inspecting to see if anything was missing.

As we neared the exit, I noticed her frantically foraging through the basket, lifting all the items and putting them back down. She seemed desperate, frustrated, mad, and irritated all at the same time, and do you want to know why? Because we didn't steal a damn thing. We never ever intended to, but we played that racist for the fun of it, and we got a good laugh out of it.

For once I didn't feel like a victim of racism, for once I didn't feel that I was the abused and the racist the abuser. For once, I felt I had the upper hand. I felt so powerful, the feeling was so damn liberating.

So yes, I'll be doing this a lot more from now on. Why should I let racists have the upper hand? Why should a racist spoil my entire day? Why should a racist have control over my life? Nope. No way now or ever again. I will laugh at racists if my life isn't in danger. I will let them know and feel, that they are pathetic, insecure clowns. They will no longer make me feel that I don't have my place in this world.

Thank you for reading my perspective.

Advocacy

<https://www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/advocacy#learn-more>

Legal Definition of *advocacy*

- 1: the profession or work of an advocate
- 2: the action of advocating, pleading for, or supporting a cause or proposal

Relationship and Conflicts of Interest

The advocate may be a volunteer who is not being paid, or may be a professional being paid by the client or by some organisation. The advocate's reward aspect may affect the quality of the advocacy or limit the extent of support given. There may be conflicts of interest, where the advocate is under pressure from their employer, which may reduce the effectiveness of the advocacy. Typically the advocate will be in a much less marginalised situation than the client.

Clarity of purpose,

Safeguard,

Confidentiality,

Equality and diversity,

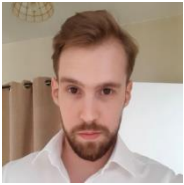
Empowerment and

putting people first are the principles of advocacy.

OTHER raises its ugly head again

When the person needing advocacy or allyship support might be OTHERed by the decisionmaker, then they are practically forced to employ an advocate or ally, who is outside of the OTHERed group, to be heard at all.

If they are unable to employ or otherwise gain support from an advocate, they seriously risk not having their side of the case heard at all. This type of prejudice may be felt, but is difficult to prove. Once a disadvantageous decision has been made, it usually becomes very difficult to appeal against the decision. This factor makes it a very high stakes situation to be caught in, especially if the client is marginalised and has access to few resources.



F. Sennesael

François Sennesael • University of Oxford (United Kingdom)

The call for decolonisation of many areas of social life is increasingly being heard in the international aid sector. For the author, one of the workstreams should concern the advocacy which, according to him and with strong arguments, remains rooted in the system of representation of the Other forged at the beginning of the 20th century.

Advocacy has taken centre stage in many humanitarian non-governmental organisations (NGOs). While *Médecins Sans Frontières*'s (MSF) commitment to advocacy can be seen as a founding act acknowledged with the Nobel Peace Prize in 1999, the rise and professionalisation of advocacy stem mainly from the increasingly complex humanitarian responses and the ever-greater role of international NGOs in the public actions of governments. This article, based on anthropological studies on the representation of the Other, examines the ultimate purpose of humanitarian advocacy, and seeks to answer the question, "Should advocacy be decolonised?", by presenting several examples and channels of thought. In its focus on Africa, this article does not address the specific techniques of humanitarian advocacy, but rather its epistemological construct. It suggests that humanitarian advocacy is still anchored in the representation of the Other that was devised at the turn of the 20th century, and that advocacy contributes to redefining sovereignty and local biopolitics in the Foucauldian sense. It also favours the creation of a vertical and transnational notion of responsibility that runs counter to the formation of a real partnership between international NGOs and local actors. Initiating a broader reflection on the decolonisation of humanitarian action is therefore meaningful.

The anthropological construct of the African

In 2018, Adam Branch, Director of the Centre for African Studies at the University of Cambridge, published an article in the *Cambridge Journal of Anthropology*⁽¹⁾. He established a link between the contemporary production of knowledge on Africa and the systematic colonial representation of the Other. In particular, he called for the decolonisation of the Centres for African Studies at the universities of Oxford and Cambridge.

He suggested that the anthropological construct of the African by European scientists, harking back to the early 20th century and culminating in a process begun two centuries earlier, is still today's dominant paradigm when it comes to "imagining" African societies. This construct defines the African as a primitive version of the white man, one devoid of any legacy, like a fossil displayed in a museum. It depicts the African as a savage, since he must be rendered civilised for him to be brought from point A to point B, i.e. toward modernity. In addition, he is deemed ignorant, since he is unaware of what is good for himself. Through photography, anthropology, and anthropometry in particular, the African was scientifically "racialised" and described by Europeans through his external features⁽²⁾, just as Edward Saïd argued Europeans did in the Middle East⁽³⁾, and other authors in India and Southeast Asia⁽⁴⁾. Transposing Michel Foucault's work on the definition of madness in French society⁽⁵⁾, it can be said that this construct, based on the discourse of who is the Other, is used by the European society to reassure itself that it is coherent and that it can define itself as being the norm. This construct very distinctly delineates "them" – primitive societies that must develop – from "us" – already developed societies. It has also helped to secure Western hegemony, to support a civilisational narrative based on the idea of

evolution and modernity, and to deny to others the right to define and construct themselves. It is this very repudiation that Frantz Fanon qualifies as structural and psychological violence.

The advent of humanitarian advocacy

Advocacy can be defined as a process aimed at influencing people and/or institutions in order to change practices, rules, and/or behaviours. Applied to humanitarianism, it deals with bringing about long-term change and development for the “common good”. In this instance, the advocacy manager has the task of working on structural problems, in order to prevent NGOs from merely treating the symptoms of a crisis without addressing the root causes. These operations become the means to reach an end, that is to say, a profound change in the societies where interventions are taking place⁽⁶⁾. Even if humanitarian advocacy operates on a very different scale of morality and ethics from that of anthropological missions underwritten by colonising countries⁽⁷⁾, the question remains whether this advocacy has not remained anchored, despite itself, to a discursive formation based on a representation of the Other going back to the early 20th century.

Humanitarian advocacy operates on a very different scale of morality and ethics from that of anthropological missions underwritten by colonising countries.

The advent of advocacy, while certainly rooted in civilising missions, was, first and foremost, the consequence of the increasing complexity of humanitarian operations. Indeed, many countries have experienced so-called “protracted” conflicts, in the sense that outbreaks of violence are cyclical and decade-long, forcing international NGOs to settle permanently in unstable environments. But advocacy was also the result of the neoliberal policies of the World Bank in the 1980s. Delivered for the good of the postcolonial State, these policies contributed to the decline of the African State, leaving room to international NGOs (and religious movements⁽⁸⁾) to carry out their actions in social fields, especially in health and education. The structural adjustments of the World Bank have caused fragmentation and scattering of national sovereignty, prompting international NGOs to fully participate in carrying out national government actions. In seeking structural changes rather than facilitated humanitarian responses, the advocacy of international NGOs enters, *de facto*, into a political mindset, whereby it becomes a policy developer and an active player in the biopolitics of the countries of intervention.

Identifying priorities in advocacy and objectification of the Other

It is important to demonstrate how colonial discourse is persistent in its representation of the Other whenever international NGOs think of Africa and of advocacy. The issue of decolonising advocacy is primarily related to the locations where the strategies in advocacy have been defined and developed. Thus the priorities are predominantly set by Western countries. Therefore, the questions come down to: whom should be saved? what are the causes to defend or not to defend? It is in finding the answers to these questions that the representation of the Other is so important.

Even if during the last two decades, NGOs have pushed for a renewed concept of North-South partnerships to uphold local actors and create resilience and sustainability, the notion of the partnership has been fundamentally truncated. To understand this, we must focus on the very notion of otherness. Philippe De Leener insists that the notion of the Other is an “ideal for self-fulfilment”, that is to say, we expect the Other not to be “us”, but one who will realise their fulfilment⁽⁹⁾ in accordance with our own perception. This is the point of view that Guillaume Blanc upholds, for example, in his book *L’Invention du colonialisme vert*⁽¹⁰⁾. He describes the existence of a Western ideal, an “African Eden”, which must be protected from Africans themselves⁽¹¹⁾ by setting up restricted natural reserves. De Leener also presents what he calls the “paradoxical injunction of otherness” of Western partners, which he sums up as follows: “You are wonderful, but become like us”⁽¹²⁾. This is the paradox at the heart of humanitarian

advocacy: “Become modern, like us, but above all stay different, and be as we imagine you to be”. This is, therefore, a problem of reflexivity, and a refusal to allow others to be themselves.

This representation of the Other, this paradoxical injunction of otherness resulting in truncated partnerships has led to certain consequences, whenever humanitarians have set their priorities in promoting advocacy, particularly in the health sector. In fact, one can see a link between the representation of the Other anchored in a colonial discursive formation and the setting of humanitarian priorities.

In her book, *Curing their ills: Colonial Power and African Illness*, Megan Vaughan⁽¹³⁾ suggests that during colonisation, biomedical discourse on Africa centred on the need to represent the Other as different and savage. Vaughan demonstrates the existence of a discourse that sought to link certain diseases with the primitive aspect of African society: Africans were ill because their society was fundamentally ailing, undeveloped, fossilised, and primitive. Africa had therefore become, according to her, “synonymous with death, disease, and uncontrolled sexuality”⁽¹⁴⁾. As James Aggrey feared in 1920, Africa has since been considered to be a “hotbed of disease”⁽¹⁵⁾. Thus, nowadays, we still find “African diseases” caused by poverty, underdevelopment, and unbridled sexuality⁽¹⁶⁾ (e.g. HIV, tuberculosis, malaria), as opposed to “European diseases” caused by modern lifestyles (e.g. diabetes). This approach was particularly criticised in an article published in 2014 by members of MSF in the medical journal *The Lancet*⁽¹⁷⁾. They recalled that considering tuberculosis as an exclusively “societal” disease, as Mohsin Ali⁽¹⁸⁾ had written in the same journal, merely encourages the idea that only the fight against poverty and cultural changes can eradicate the disease (which few studies have demonstrated). Mohsin, therefore, has seemingly downgraded the importance of medical care, and has put more emphasis on the “primitive” aspect of societies with a high prevalence of tuberculosis. In 1908, in *The Lancet*, Lambkin held the same discourse on a syphilis epidemic in Uganda, i.e. the immoral sexual behaviour of women in the Kingdom of Buganda was claimed to be the main cause of the epidemic⁽¹⁹⁾.

As Simukai Chigudu⁽²⁰⁾ argues, the distinction between “diseases of the poor” and “diseases of the rich” is based on developmental teleology, which assumes that Africa must necessarily follow the Western epidemiological pattern of going from point A to point B. According to this pattern, illnesses specific to African societies must first be treated to reduce infant mortality, malnutrition, and thus increase life expectancy, so as to ultimately arrive at the emergence of “modern” diseases, i.e. chronic diseases. However, according to the World Health Organization⁽²¹⁾, in low-income countries, chronic diseases cause 80% more deaths than those from malaria, HIV, and tuberculosis combined. Yet, for example, the Global Fund’s programmes focus exclusively on these three diseases. When Clare Herrick⁽²²⁾ simply suggests that chronic diseases lack charisma, it seems important instead to point out how tempting it is to use “African” infectious diseases to construct a representation of the Other as fossilised and savage. The notion that chronic diseases lack charisma therefore stems more from an idealised view of the Other than from a lack of interest in the symptoms of chronic diseases.

This biomedical discourse on the Other has recently been disrupted by the Covid-19 pandemic. In fact, the West now finds itself confronted by a situation in which it has had little or no experience until now: Africa appears to be less affected by an epidemic. However, international NGOs have promptly sounded the alarm: if the European health systems were to fail in managing the pandemic, how would African societies, weaker and more ailing, be able to survive? Europeans, therefore, had to come up with reasons for the low number of infections: “they” do not do enough testing, the figures have been doctored, their population is younger, or the climate is hotter. While these reasons may certainly hold water, very seldom has the idea been raised that African societies may actually be culturally better able to impose sanitary restrictions. More fundamentally speaking, this is a social issue. Returning to Foucault and his study of madness: what if the discourse aimed at determining who is mad and who is not has reached its limit? How can we keep thinking of Europe as the result of an epidemiological transition toward modernity? How then can the dichotomy between “them”, the ailing societies, and “us”, the modern societies still hold?

This biomedical discourse on the Other has recently been disrupted by the Covid-19 pandemic.

Objectifying the Other: advocacy and the creation of vulnerable subjects

The process of setting the priorities of humanitarian advocacy has had a fairly significant political impact on African societies. Even if the answers to the questions, “whom should we save?” and “which are the causes to defend?” are anchored in a colonial discursive formation in their representation of the Other, defending these causes requires the creation of subjects who personify this discourse. This is how humanitarian advocacy acts on the discursive creation of very specific subjects: vulnerable people, victims, and those who need “not justice and representation, but help and assistance”⁽²³⁾. The creation of vulnerable people, made possible by the weakening of African States, takes place through a process of objectification in its Foucauldian sense.

In so doing, a distinction is made between “Bios” life (having an existential identity and a way of life) and “Zoe” life (the mere act of living, life reduced to its biological essentials). The creation of vulnerable people thus tends to focus on Zoe life, in the sense that what matters is not the political organisation of societies (considered ailing and primitive, because traditions cannot serve modernity), but their mere biological survival. Consequently, the individuals objectified as “vulnerable people” are deprived of any political existence, which therefore silences them politically. All that remains, as Achille Mbembe argues⁽²⁴⁾, are necropolitics: the power of deciding who should live or die, which represents the ultimate expression of sovereignty.

Following the analyses of Alex de Waal, Jenny Edkins, Chloe Dugger, and Adam Branch⁽²⁵⁾, humanitarian advocacy, more than the State, is now responsible for policies of livelihood in countries of intervention. As Charles Piot argues, “It is they – *Médecins Sans Frontières*, CARE, Amnesty International, and Human Rights Watch – who are reshaping the face of African mankind. They decide whom to save and whom to let die”⁽²⁶⁾. Therefore, when international NGOs respect the territorial sovereignty of the States in which they intervene, they claim sovereignty over the politics of life. This sovereignty is exercised by international actors, in accordance with an agenda of non-regulated actions anchored in a colonial representation of the Other. Such transnational sovereignty is shared, just as it is vertical, anarchic, and uncontrollable. It is one that creates new categories, and new meanings for terms, such as “village”, “gender”, “youth”, “chief”, or “tradition”.

When international NGOs respect the territorial sovereignty of the States in which they intervene, they claim sovereignty over the politics of life.

For example, in a research paper published in 2018, Bosire *et al.* developed the notion of “biological sub-citizenship”⁽²⁷⁾. In fact, following a hundred interviews conducted in several health centres in Nairobi, they saw that people living with HIV (PLHIV) who have access to free treatment funded by international donors are perceived as being biologically stronger. It is believed that PLHIV can claim rights based on their serological status alone, which people with diabetes, for example, are unable to do.

How can advocacy be decolonised?

This article has shown how the representation of the Other has had an influence on humanitarian advocacy in Africa. It suggests that the setting of priorities in advocacy is still anchored in a discursive formation that was constructed during colonisation. This has had an effect on the content of humanitarian programmes and on the construct of “vulnerable subjects”.

Advocacy must become part of the recentralisation process initiated by many NGOs.

It is therefore essential to include humanitarian action when decolonising knowledge in general, and to practice what the philosopher Kwasi Wiredu calls “conceptual self-exorcism”, i.e. “emancipation from the spirit of colonial knowledge”⁽²⁸⁾. It therefore seems crucial for this consideration to play an integral

part in the advocacy activity of international NGOs. How do we perceive the Other? How do we believe this affects our strategies and our setting of priorities?

In addition, advocacy must become part of the recentralisation process initiated by many NGOs, by granting significantly more power to people based in the countries of intervention. This process can reduce biases due to remote management and to information perceived as Western. Likewise, it is essential to diversify the backgrounds of people holding positions in advocacy, both in terms of nationality and places of schooling, that is to say, the places where their knowledge has been acquired.

Finally, this article is also a plea for greater inclusion of anthropological research in humanitarian NGOs, so that the impact of interventions on societies can be assessed, and the image of how others see themselves can be understood. It is from this point that a real partnership can begin.

Translated from the French by Alan Johnson

Biography

François Sennesael • A Ph.D. candidate in the Department of Politics and International Relations in Lady Margaret Hall at the University of Oxford (UK). He holds a master's degree in African Studies from the University of Oxford and a master's degree in International Relations from the Catholic University of Louvain (Belgium). He worked at the Belgian Embassy in Uganda and South Sudan as Deputy Head of Mission for ALIMA in South Sudan, and as Advocacy and Analysis Manager for *Médecins Sans Frontières* in the Democratic Republic of Congo.

Trauma-informed care is critical to safe and supportive crisis intervention.

Trauma-informed care is guided by a detailed understanding of how trauma can shape an individual's perceptions and behavior. Its potential to impact a person's mental, physical, social, and emotional well-being means that an appropriate response recognizes the ongoing and interdependent needs for a person's sense of safety and connection, and for the management of emotions and impulses.

Trauma-informed care mindfully considers the nature and manifestations of trauma:

Trauma can be rooted in a range of experiences and impact a person in a range of ways:

- *It can stem from a single experience, or a series of experiences.*
- *It can be an actual or perceived threat to a person's well-being.*
- *It can negatively impact a person's daily coping mechanisms.*
- *It can color or distort a person's ongoing perspective, including their behavioral responses.*

“It is important for crisis workers to be aware that the body remembers somatic and other sensory experiences of trauma.” – Laurie Barkin

Traumatization occurs when an individual's internal and external resources are inadequate for coping. Types of trauma include:

- *Acute Trauma (Type I)*
- *Complex Trauma (Type II)*
- *Crossover Trauma (Type III)*
- *Vicarious or Secondary Trauma/Compassion Fatigue*

“Life experiences form neural connections in the brain, and just like a trail becomes more beaten down the more times it is traveled, repeated trauma can reinforce these pathways’ construction, forming the groundwork for PTSD, depression, or addiction.” – T.D. Loftus

Triggers are the signals that act as possible signs of danger, based on historic traumatic experiences. These can lead to a range of survival responses:

- *Emotional*
- *Psychological*
- *Behavioral*

“If our intention is to be great leaders and effective, skilled interveners, then we have to be sympathetic, compassionate, and NOT take [challenging] behavior personally. When we do this, we’re able to rationally and effectively respond.” – Maria Navone

For detailed explanations of each of these concepts, and guidance on providing trauma-informed care, make sure you [download CPI's free Trauma-Informed Care Resource Guide](#).

CPI training supports a trauma-informed care approach.

As you’ll learn in the CPI guide, trauma-informed care seeks to prevent re-traumatizing an individual in crisis, while empowering them to cope more effectively. CPI recommends these practices to help avoid re-traumatization:

- **Screen for trauma history.**
 - CPI offers a comprehensive *De-escalation Preferences Form* in our [free guide](#); it’s a great tool for gathering the right information to provide trauma-informed care to children or adults.

- **Deepen attunement skills—learn to interpret behavior effectively as communication.**
 - CPI's [*Nonviolent Crisis Intervention*](#)[®] training emphasizes this practice as a means of safer and more caring crisis prevention, particularly when working with individuals who may have a trauma history.
- **Employ person-centered, strengths-based thinking and language.**
 - CPI recommends a [person-centered approach](#) across a range of disciplines, which allows us to see and support individuals for who they truly are as people, not just how they behave in crisis.
- **Provide stability and empowerment.**
 - CPI's evidence-based approach to [limit setting](#) supports decision-making opportunities for an individual in crisis that can help de-escalate behaviors triggered by trauma.
- **Consider the physiological, psychological, and social risks of physical interventions—choose the least restrictive option as a last resort if somebody is a danger to themselves or others.**
 - CPI does teach safe, nonviolent physical de-escalation and disengagement, but our philosophy is emphatic that the safest restraint is the one that never happens. Learn how to [reduce the risks of restraint](#).
- **Prioritize debriefing after a crisis to help foster resilience and develop successful coping skills.**
 - CPI's *COPING Mode*SM is a tool that can help staff and the populations they serve process, recover, build resilience, and plan for prevention after a crisis event—check out our free on-demand presentation on [facilitating a debriefing](#).

“Is it really deviant behavior, or is it a trauma response?” – Stan Granger

No matter your role, you can play an important part in facilitating trauma-informed care.

As our cultural understanding of trauma deepens, trauma-informed care is being embraced by human services professionals across a range of disciplines. Trauma-informed care has been found to make a measurable and positive difference even in settings where individuals haven't experienced trauma—for example, trauma-informed

schools are seeing profoundly positive student outcomes because of the model's emphasis on restorative and prosocial dynamics. In hospitals, a trauma-informed approach helps clinical staff prevent disruptive behavior by considering potential trauma triggers before they engage with a patient, and adjusting their care delivery accordingly.

A trauma-informed approach, then, has the dual benefit of not only providing more person-centered care to a person who needs it, but of keeping the professionals providing that care safer and more resilient.

“I find the building of rapport and being trauma-informed synonymous, and inextricably tied together, resulting in healthier and more positive outcomes for our population. Getting to know a person and their life experiences affords me and others the opportunity to better provide needed care, offer more specific and tailored services, and have more successful interventions should they be needed.” – D.C. Foster

As we continue to learn about the profound relationships between trauma and health, it's important to embrace a supportive approach that focuses on caring and empowerment. Access to trauma-informed care can improve a child's potential to thrive as an adult, and empower adults to improve their health and quality of life. Trauma-informed care is a way to connect ourselves, and those we care for, to greater *Care, Welfare, Safety, and SecuritySM*.

Most of us have heard the phrase, **THINK** before you speak. And it makes a lot of sense. Before opening your mouth there should be intentional thought to these five questions:

1. Is it **T**True?
2. Is it **H**Helpful?
3. Is it **I**Inspiring?
4. Is it **N**Necessary?
5. Is it **K**Kind?

Choose your words carefully

We know that words are powerful. When words are spoken in the appropriate tone, volume, and cadence, at the right time, and to the intended audience, they have the power to move mountains. They can solve misunderstandings, build relationships, and de-escalate situations. They can inspire, repair, teach, and encourage. Yes, words are powerful, and we should choose them with intention.

But ... what about actions?

I'm not talking about the "sticks and stones" kind of actions that we know do harm. I'm talking about the actions that happen without conscious thought, without one's full intention, without foresight or the weighing of possible negative effects. Actions that we do by default when we are operating on autopilot.

Actions that happen because, "I'm a teacher," because, "we have a good relationship," because "I was being supportive," because "they usually like it." Actions that might make sense to you but may be unclear and confusing to the recipient. You know what I'm talking about, actions that seem like no big deal. Let me tell you, I see the impact, and it is a big deal.

"Everything we do should be a decision."

I wrote this quote down in my CPI Workbook at my latest trainer recertification course. Not only did I write it down, but I underlined and highlighted it! Our trainer shared a story about a co-worker of his that pretends to punch him in the stomach every time that they see each other. He talked about how it negatively affects his relationship with this person because he doesn't understand the purpose of his behavior. He shared that he walks away from these awkward interactions feeling confused and annoyed. This got me thinking about the situations that I was seeing in the classrooms I visit as an Autism Spectrum Disorder teacher consultant. Are people really thinking about their actions beforehand? Are their actions a result of intentional decisions? I needed to investigate further.

Reflecting on my trainer's story, I wanted to identify some differences between his example and the classroom situations that I was preparing to take a closer look at. The two players in my trainer's example are individuals that have the skills needed to communicate with one another, cope through confusing situations, identify and make sense of their own emotions, and assert themselves. I trust that should there be conversation between these two people regarding the concerning behavior, that they would be able to walk away having a better understanding of the why and how of these interactions and make any changes necessary in order to work toward building a more positive relationship.

It pays to pause

But let's consider a different example, one in which the individuals involved have communication and social skills that are impacted more so than the people in the first. As we give attention to this next scenario, I would like you to consider this acronym: **PAUSE** before you act. Similar to **THINK** before you speak, **PAUSE** before you act challenges you to ask these five questions before making an intentional decision and taking action:

- Does it have a **Purpose**?
- Is it **A**ppropriate for the moment?
- Is it **U**nderstood by the individual?
- Does it contribute to student **S**uccess?
- Does it **E**cho your guiding principles?

An autistic learner is sitting at a table. Actually, let me rephrase that. An autistic learner is still sitting at their table. Let me be more specific. An autistic learning is sitting at their table completing their independent work tasks. As the teacher walks behind him, she gently ruffles his hair with her fingertips. The student stops working. His gaze rises from the top of his desk to the wall in front of him. He sits there for a couple of seconds, processing. He looks to be confused and could use a supportive prompt to keep working but the teacher hasn't looked back since passing him. The student starts to tense up and pushes the palm of his hand into his chin, a clear sign of anxiety for him. He gets up from his chair and walks away from his work area, pacing and holding his ears with both hands.

Another staff member, who did not see the earlier interaction, shows the student a, "When and Then" visual, trying to redirect him back to finish his last work task. The student starts screaming and crying, drops to the floor, quickly jumps back to a standing position and pushes the staff member before dropping back to the floor, continuing to cry. The teacher, who ruffled the student's hair, turned around to witness the student push the other staff member. The two staff members looked at each other confused about what had just happened and one of them said, "What was that about?"

Let's look into each question, keeping in mind how our actions, no matter how benign we think they are, may negatively impact students if one or all of these questions aren't considered.

Does it have a *Purpose*?

What was the teacher's purpose for ruffling the student's hair as she walked by? While debriefing the incident, the team oriented themselves to the basic facts that occurred. When the teacher said that she walked by the student and ruffled his hair as she passed, the team recognized that this was one of the factors that led to the student's anxiety, defensive, and risk behaviors. The teacher shared that she was trying to provide the student with some positive reinforcement because he was doing such a great job on his work. She said she really didn't give it much thought as she passed him and didn't realize it would turn into an incident that needed debriefing. She said she wouldn't have done it if she knew it was going to lead to him getting so upset.

Is it Appropriate for the moment?

Was it an appropriate time to ruffle the student's hair while he was completing his independent work? The teacher shared that this is usually a welcomed and enjoyable interaction between her and the student. After reflection, she shared that the purpose of independent work time is for the student to be able to complete a series of tasks independently and that positive reinforcement, in whatever form, would have been more appropriate after he had completed all his work.

Is it *Understood* by the student?

Did the student understand what happened to him, why it happened, and who did it? The team agreed that the student was probably confused about what happened especially since he did not see the teacher coming. The teacher admitted that she had not consciously considered his personal space while he worked. It was discussed that the student may have had a lot to process in the seconds after contact was made; the surprise of an unexpected touch, organization of his sensory system, probable confusion, possible anger, and other things that the team could suppose.

Does it contribute to student Success?

Did this interaction between the student and the teacher contribute to his success? When the team discussed this, they shared that they were in the process of collecting data in order to update the student's Behavior Intervention Plan (BIP). While this may not have contributed to the student's success in that moment, they hoped to learn from this incident and make changes to their interactions, responses, and approaches to him, which would hopefully result in future success.

Does it *Echo* your guiding principles?

Guiding Principles are a set of values that establish a framework for expected behavior and decision-making. Guiding Principles ensure that the humans in your care are receiving focused care. Did ruffling her student's hair while he completed his independent work go against the teacher's Guiding Principles? This is a question intended for reflection on the part of the individual or individuals in charge of providing focused care. This question, while not any more important than the others, will help us look closer at those "no big deal" actions and guide us in making more intentional decisions.

It is estimated that the average adult makes 35,000 decisions each day. And with that many decisions, we can either get really good at learning from our mistakes, or we can get really good at learning how to make really good decisions. I know that we won't get it right every time and that making mistakes is a part of our learning and growth, but if we **PAUSE** before we act, making sure our actions have purpose, are appropriate, are understood, contribute to success, and echo guiding principles, we will bring more intentionality into the decisions that we make, leading to less behavior, more learning, and a whole lot of success!

Author Bio



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De-escalation Protect the safety of the advocate and any other nearby people

Listen before speaking – this is polite but also allows you to assess your own safety in this situation.

Communication is someone speaking and **THEN** someone listening.

But it is much safer to listen before you try to speak. Maybe you would be wiser to politely walk away? Maybe acknowledge the person, then slowly and carefully walk away?

People who want to talk first are much less likely to listen. Thus you might be wasting your time to talk to them at all. You may be entering a hazardous situation by even trying to talk to them?

A wise man can learn from a fool, but a fool can't learn from a wise man.

https://www.nzno.org.nz/Portals/0/Files/Documents/Groups/Emergency%20Nurses/Conference/Murtagh_Law_De-escalation%5B1%5D.pdf

De-escalation and Defence in an Emergency Department Setting

This presentation draws from Australian research and from material taken from NMDHB's personal restraint manual.
Anger

Drivers usually relate to either primary or secondary anger.

In primary anger Fight, flight or freeze in reaction to an immediate life threatening event.

A purely physiologically driven response.

In secondary anger

Fight, flight or freeze reaction is a mixture of conscious and unconscious responses.

Generated by past experiences/own world view.

Triggers feelings of powerlessness and/or a fear of rejection. Drivers

Pain Anxiety Wait times Not being informed

Other possible drivers Psychosis. Delirium. Confusion. Intoxication. Other organic disorders.

De-escalation Framework

Trigger phase; Increase in anxiety and irritability.

Escalation phase; Hostile and remote.

Crisis Phase; Physical aggression.

Trigger Phase Signs of Anxiety / Irritability Pacing Restless Worried expression Withdrawn Abrupt tone of voice

Physiological signs; pallor, sweating, red face.

Intervention Skills

Act immediately. Establish physical and emotional control of yourself. Be authentic. Maintain an open body posture and facial expression. Recognition of persons feelings and current state. Safe, sensitive and supportive approach.

De-escalation Technique Y

Offer your help. Don't be afraid to apologise if appropriate. Reflective listening; nod, paraphrase, - ask about their concerns. Problem solving / reframing of issues. Suggest going to a quiet area. Encourage the client to sit with you.

Who/ what can support you? Family/whanau. Kaupapa /other staff. Police. Personal belongings.

Escalation Phase Hostile and/or Remote Verbal expression of negative emotion. Direct insults / verbal threats. Looks angry or incongruently calm. Closed body posture. Reduced eye contact (?cultural norm). Aggressive tone of voice. Physiological changes; Rapid breathing, profuse sweating, shaking.

Intervention Skills

As in trigger phase plus; Ensure others are aware of the situation. Use a more directive approach if required. Contain level of arousal. Assess if safe to engage and continually evaluate this during de-escalation attempts.

De escalation Techniques

Target arousal level by 'holding' eg; listening while using non-threatening body positioning.

Target hostility by use of empathy and compliment.

Target thinking by encouraging thought. Continue to use active listening techniques.

More de-escalation techniques

Offer a way out by giving choices. Mood match. Mirror posture. Match breathing then reduce rate slowly. Personalise yourself. Who else can support?

Environmental management techniques

Before crisis phase Increase use of personal space for person and self. Consider safety of others - remove from area now. Consider use of environmental restraint if possible. Very low tolerance for calling for police backup.

Crisis Phase

Physically Aggressive / High Risk Aggressive Behaviour Throwing objects Tipping furniture Raising fists Slamming doors

Serious threats of violence to self or others (very serious if has the means). Punching walls Assault Interventions
Your safety is paramount. Further increase personal space. Ensure you have an exit. Decision as to whether to respond or exit. If arms self, withdraw to a safe place. Wait for Police backup.

Defuse and Debrief Always and Every time

Always defuse and or debrief. Prevents PTSD symptoms. Reduces sense of resentment. Helps reflective process.
Builds sense of team. Reduces the chance of violence being seen as normal and acceptable. Emergency plan Make sure your department has one that everyone knows and has practiced it.

How Chris Voss' "Tactical Empathy" Reframes Power and Vulnerability

A primer for those struggling to put themselves out there.



[Synthia Stark](#)

Nov 4, 2021

<https://medium.com/preoccupy-negative-thoughts/how-chris-voss-tactical-empathy-reframes-power-and-vulnerability-56de9c381aba>

6 min read

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Listen



Photo by [Zura Modebadze](#) from [Pexels](#)

I'm a provisional therapist and I've spent a lot of time talking to people on both ends of the empathetic scale. I've seen clients that are overwhelmed by the love, joy, and distress that others face.

It causes them to feel paralyzed with fear and uncertainty. They end up going to therapy to better process their emotions and to gradually learn their own brand of self-care.

I've also met people who struggle to be as empathetic. They had rough and tumultuous childhoods and now have a hard time opening up to others. Yet, there's a part of them that yearns to escape their hardened exterior shell.

They want to so badly to be understood — but they also know that certain communication skills don't come automatically to them. Thus, they come to therapy because they want someone to help train them to be that person who is just as sociable as everyone else.

Empathy Is Usually Intuitive

For many of us, empathy comes rather naturally and is generally intuitive. It's a fleeting switch that gets activated, without any real reason or purpose — it just does.

For example, maybe your friend is hurting, and you automatically find yourself thinking in the shoes of the other person. You give them the space to be heard, so you listen in, nod your head, and provide some encouraging statements here and there.

Perhaps you give them a hug, reassure them that things are temporary, and carry on with your day.

When There's So Much Empathy

Their problems plague you and sift in your mind, and it starts to affect your own well-being. You also come across others who seem closed off and dark (even if they are not meaning to). No matter what you do — they don't seem to budge.

It's not really on you — it's on them, as much as I hate to say it.

They have to learn to make peace that not everyone is going to hurt them. Yes, someone has really hurt them before and it has influenced how they are today. Yet, it's not deterministic.

We are, after all, a byproduct of both [genetics and the environment](#). Even if your friend came from a long line of people who were always stoic, they aren't doomed to be exactly like them for the rest of their eternity.

When You Feel Closed Off

If you are this closed-off person, you might pad yourself with new people, new friends, new allies, and so on. Sure, they don't replace the pain of those who had already hurt you, but those new memories often give less weight to those past experiences.

Forging new experiences, you make up for the lost time. You can learn empathy with your best friends, romantic partners, and your children.

Remember, it's not just genetics at play here — it's the environment that plays a big role in your life. This can include:

- Moving to the big city (or a completely different/small one)

- Climbing up the corporate ladder
- Attending a new school or training academy
- Finding new friends from your newfound hobbies

The possibilities are limitless, and I will admit that it can be hard to see the big picture sometimes.

How Tactical Empathy Helps

Chris Voss, a former head of the FBI's international kidnap and hostage negotiation team, coined the term "[tactical empathy](#)". He's written a lot of books and has a lot of videos on this topic and is gaining a lot of popularity in the mass media.

His work suggests that negotiating with others requires a high degree of [emotional intelligence](#). Here, our emotional intelligence pertains to an ability to:

- Manage our own emotions
- Be self-aware of how we come across to others
- Handle others' emotions towards us
- Creatively problem solve
- Remain flexible during moments of conflict
- Diffuse tough situations
- Be empathetic towards others
- Build relationships with others

- Relieve stress

Often, many don't associate empathy with high-stakes negotiations — but Voss takes the cake for making it sound downright appealing:

“Hostage negotiation is like emotional intelligence on steroids. Most of us avoid negotiation because we're hardwired to fear confrontation. We imagine conversations going down negative paths and tend not to give others a chance, or don't hear the opportunities they give us.”

Here, Voss has primed empathy as a negotiation tool that can help us be better people, such as a better parent, child, spouse, or manager.

He uses his previous experiences with the FBI to establish credibility for his premise. For example, if you wanted someone to have trust in you quickly, you can do what a lot of patient therapists do — which is to just listen in.

The Art of Active Listening

By active listening, I'm not meaning that you interject someone with your own similar stories or debate with them (like you would in a normal conversation). It means sitting down and not indicating that you have a specific agenda.

As he suggested, it means keeping our mouths temporarily closed, even if we don't necessarily agree with the other person. Giving them the space to be heard, and not feeling invalidated, you will gain something that you didn't previously have — trust.

You let the person share their interpretation or understanding of the world, and had kept an open mind about it — even if you didn't really agree with them.

They'll respect that and end up divulging information that will help you in the long run. For example, they might do some active listening on you — when you're down. They might even unknowingly provide special insight into a problem you are currently facing.

After that initial trust is garnered, you can then divulge more of yourself, strategically in bits and pieces. You can even tell the person that it is hard to open up and that you're trying.

Since there's trust and respect, they'll appreciate the attempts.

Why It's So Hard

Voss acknowledges that it is no easy feat to be an active listener — especially in high-stake negotiation or even regular conversation. It requires putting yourself out there, and sometimes we fear that will lose control, resulting in a potentially bruised ego.

We generally want to seem “right” and so, we want to have the last say. Ironically, by putting ourselves out there, we end up gaining more than just our egos and power. We garner trust from the other person and they will eventually give us what we want in the end.

Instead of battling emotions, which will always be present in daily conversation, we fashion and wield them into a powerful sword.

Breaking away from your tough exterior, people will appreciate the efforts you are making to not keep it all inside. Even if you're not perfect, people will open up more to you once they realize that you are not intending to be cold or distant.

Parting Thoughts

We say we are logical, but more often than not, we operate on impulses, beliefs, and other thought systems that are not always statistically accurate. Instead of ignoring emotions and putting on a cold front, it's better to wield those emotions carefully into an empathetic sword.

Under the premise of tactical empathy, you are putting yourself out there through active listening, and you end up receiving more than you anticipated. That's a good thing, especially since trust is a valuable commodity in today's world.

As [Chris Voss mentioned in one of his books](#):

“The beauty of empathy is that it doesn't demand that you agree with the other person's ideas.”

Judgement when Affected Party Not Present in Court

The principle of The OTHER not being heard, likely due to the prejudice of the decision maker, appears to show up starkly in this case report. The judge felt confident, without listening to the victim, that a \$1500 payment was appropriate, in all of the circumstances. The judge "accepted" the offer, when that should have been the victim's decision. It seems to illustrate that the judge lacked a cultural understanding of the victim's social situation and options and values.

The victim of a sexual assault at work was effectively not heard in this case, even though she was required to actually be present in the court building, as she was expected to be called as a witness. She was not in the court room at the time the judge "accepted" the reparation offer.

The case was when a friend of the sexual predator was charged with publishing the name of the victim on a radio talkback show, in breach of a name suppression order. The law requires that the victim's name be suppressed from publication, in an attempt to prevent further victimisation of the victim. Thus once a conviction for sexual assault has been entered, it is automatic that an order for victim name suppression will be made in every case.

When sexual assaults take place in a work environment, victims have less freedom to protect themselves from the predator. This shows up in the extreme reluctance of victims to make a complaint in these circumstances. When not appropriately protected, their only remaining reliable option, is to move on. This form of defence usually has high costs, loss of income while receiving treatment and seeking new employment.

At the end of the day, the predator receives more protection.

The judge said he had to proceed on the basis that it could not be proved that Bolton knowingly or recklessly breached the suppression.

He said in a submission Bolton apologised to the court but felt ultimate responsibility lay elsewhere and that he was an easy mark and had been singled out by the vindictive nature of the victim.

"He shows absolutely no remorse for her and her position," the judge said.

He said the victim had ended up giving up her job after being approached in public once her name was used.

Bolton's lawyer Michael Bott said it was an honest mistake.

He said there was no evidence that the suppression on her name was done in open court.

He said it would be unfortunate for Bolton to end up with a conviction - a mark on his record - when under law he had no fault, had no knowledge and was not reckless.

Bott said as a mark of good faith, he offered an emotional harm payment of \$1000 to the victim.

He said Bolton had apologised when he spoke to police when they showed up at his home.

Police prosecutor Sergeant Paul Macky said it was inconceivable that he did not know about the suppression.

He said he thought the victim would find the offer of \$1000 incredibly insulting.

It is fairly common for victims to refuse such payments, because of the paltry amount and because it has come from a perpetrator who hasn't made any form of meaningful apology. In essence the victims see the reparation as a breach of justice and totally out of proportion to the real world impacts of the crime.

The judge "accepted" the offer from the perpetrator's lawyer, but increased the amount to \$1500, still a paltry amount in all of the circumstances.

Victim of Kāpiti councillor David Scott says speaking out cost her everything and derailed her life

VIRGINIA FALLON15:13, Nov 03 2018

<https://www.stuff.co.nz/national/108287615/victim-of-kpiti-councillor-david-scott-says-speaking-out-cost-her-everything-and-derailed-her-life>



ROSA WOODS/STUFF

Kāpiti Coast district councillor David Scott in the Wellington District Court where he was convicted of indecent assault.

This will not be her story.

The woman indecently assaulted by Kāpiti Coast District councillor David Scott is clear – she will not be defined by the experience.

Reflecting on nearly two years of court appearances, rumours and harassment, she takes a deep breath and smiles.



ROSA WOODS/STUFF

Scott's victim says group of people from the Kāpiti Coast have hounded her since the assault.

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READ MORE:

- * [Kāpiti councillor under investigation](#)
- * [Victim says she's been ridiculed by offender's supporters](#)
- * [Kāpiti councillor found guilty of indecent assault](#)

It's a declaration of hope from a woman who says speaking out has cost her everything.

**MORE FROM
VIRGINIA FALLON • REPORTER**

virginia.fallon@stuff.co.nz

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The law means she cannot be named, so for the purposes of this story she has chosen another: Adele. It means noble and seeking justice.

The story of her assault has played out in the media since April 2017 when Scott grabbed her hips and pressed his genitals against her during a council morning tea.



SUPPLIED

These mannequins were placed outside the council in the wake of the incident. They read: "do you like my outfit", "do not invade my space" and "council PC over the top".

After making a complaint, Adele said she was hounded, terrified and re-victimised by Scott and his team of supporters who have rabidly pursued her.

One man was issued with a harassment notice after he placed three female mannequins outside the doors of the Kāpiti Coast District Council building. The mannequins were draped in signs saying: "do you like my outfit" and "do not invade my space"

In March, Scott was arrested for breaching bail conditions and lurking around Adele at a council event. A photograph taken at the event shows him standing immediately behind her.



ROSS GIBLIN/STUFF

Kāpiti Mayor K Gurunathan said protocols were put in place for dealing with David Scott before the indecent assault.

He had previously turned up to a briefing she was giving to councillors, but avoided arrest.

Since the beginning of her ordeal, Scott's small group of supporters have abused and named her in local, amateur online news sites and social media posts. Hints about her identity were also posted.

"This is the stuff that has derailed my life," Adele said.

One of Scott's supporters, Kerry Bolton, [pleaded guilty](#) on Thursday to twice naming her on a talkback radio show. Scott was in court to support him.

Adele was required to be in court. Had Bolton not changed his plea to guilty at the 11th hour, she would have had to give evidence for the prosecution at his trial – a requirement she described as farcical.

Adele said the reason she was speaking out now was to stop other women – particularly the young and disempowered – from going through what she has.



ROSA WOODS/STUFF

David Scott leaving the Wellington District Court.

She wanted a change in council policy. The Kāpiti Coast District Council had its hands tied with Scott as elected members are not subject to the usual employment laws.

"I want the system fixed so politicians are as accountable for decency as common employees are."

Scott was able to keep his council position until he was convicted of the crime. Because he has appealed the court's decision, he remains on his \$33,000 salary, although he cannot act as a councillor.



STUFF

Scott's victim had to leave her job at the council.

After Adele's assault, two other female employees [told police](#) about run-ins they had with Scott at the council building.

One said his comments and unwanted back-rubbing had made her feel uncomfortable and humiliated while the other said she had heard Scott was a predator with younger staff.

After the guilty verdict, Kāpiti Mayor K Gurunathan said protocols around Scott were put in place before he was charged with indecent assault.



ROSA WOODS/STUFF

Paraparaumu resident Kerry Raymond Bolton, 61, admitted breaching a suppression order by twice-naming Scott's victim.

Adele said the chief executive had a file of complaints but nobody wanted to put their name to a code of conduct complaint.

"They were from Kāpiti so knew who his friends were. I didn't."

Adele is not afraid of David Scott but terrified of one of his supporters who "scares the living crap out of" her. She has had visions of the supporter showing up at her home.

Educated, informed and a firm believer in the law, Adele came forward because of the other women who did not; who could not.

"It's up to us to make sure this doesn't happen to other women. That's our job and I could do that because of my privilege."

Still, this was not her story.

Her story was one of justice. She would fight for a rule change to hold politicians to the same standard as employees.

The other story is not over either. Scott's appeal is still to be heard and if he loses he will have to vacate his council seat.

Bolton's application for discharge without conviction will also be heard in January. The prosecution will oppose it.

If this was another story – a fairytale – Adele would say it had all been worth it, that the toll it took on her family, her health, and her job was all worth it.

But it wasn't. That's why she wanted the system changed.

"Would I do it again? No. If I could go back I would have found another way to stop him.

"That would have been a different story."

Kāpiti councillor David Scott found guilty of indecent assault

17:46, May 23 2018

<https://www.stuff.co.nz/national/crime/104129899/jury-hears-last-addresses-from-lawyers-in-morning-tea-indecent-assault-case>



ROBERT KITCHIN/STUFF

A Wellington District Court jury has found Kāpiti councillor David Scott guilty of indecently assaulting a council employee on Wednesday.

Kāpiti Coast District councillor David Scott has been found guilty of indecently assaulting a staff member after rubbing his genitals against her.

Scott, 71, was charged with indecent assault after it was alleged he thrust his genitals against a staff member at a morning tea last year. He had pleaded not guilty.

Scott had a number of supporters in the back of the court for the verdict. The woman who made the complaint against him was also present.



JOEL MAXWELL/STUFF

The Kāpiti Coast District Council building where a staff member says she was indecently assaulted.

The jury took three-and-a-half hours to make its decision.

READ MORE:

- * [Jury hears private measurements](#)
- * [Investigation into council indecency](#)
- * [Woman disgusted with Kāpiti councillor](#)

Outside court, Scott said he felt the "false" accusation was political and because he did things like oppose the chief executive officer's salary increase.

"It feels like they are trying to kill me," he said.

He was unsure what it meant for his future in council, but said there was a meeting tomorrow and he was hoping to be there.

He has been remanded on bail until next month for sentencing. Judge Peter Hobbs did not enter a conviction after he was asked not to by defence lawyer Mike Antunovic.

Antunovic said he was not sure if they would be applying for a discharge without conviction for Scott, but it needed to be considered.

In a closing address, Crown prosecutor Kate Feltham told the jury that David Scott pressing himself against a employee was deliberate and gross.

Feltham said there were really two issues for them to deal with.

"Did he assault her in the way she described and if so was that intentional?"

Feltham said the woman was a professional and gave evidence in a calm, coherent and logical manner.

"She was sure of what happened and she told you simply."

Feltham said it was fairly obvious that he did mean the assault to be indecent.

"It's not suggested it was some kind of joke. What it was was brief ... spontaneous, deliberate and just gross."

She said the complainant was someone prepared to do something about Scott's inappropriate behaviour.

Antunovic said he couldn't ask the jury to like Scott, but he could ask them to give him a fair go.

He said it was accepted that Scott moved behind the woman during the morning tea, but that any movement he made was not done with any criminal intent.

It was loud, noisy and a lot of chatter and there were a lot of people going by, he said.

"And then Scott thinks I should go and commit my first criminal offence, target [woman] and commit indecent assault, given that there are only 10 or 12 people in this room and that the mayor is right there," Antunovic said.

"That's just nuts, crazy and utter nonsense."

He said it was quite the coincidence that Scott's wallet was four-and-a-half inches long when she had said what she felt was four or five inches long.

The woman, whose name is suppressed, had told the jury she was disgusted to feel Scott rubbing his genitals against her.

"I felt a touch on my right hip as if someone was asking me to move so I moved, about half-a-metre, then the hand came back and I felt a man's body rubbing along the left-hand side of me and another hand grabbed my other hip, gripping me very tightly," she said.

"I couldn't move forward. I could feel a stomach and a belt buckle and parts of a man's anatomy pushing around my backside and buttocks."

Antunovic, sought to prove she could not have felt Scott's penis by asking for his measurements to be taken to by a doctor on Tuesday and provided to the jury.

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VIRGINIA FALLON 15:13, Nov 03 2018

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ROSA WOODS/STUFF

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ROSS GIBLIN/STUFF

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ROSA WOODS/STUFF

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Victim of Kāpiti councillor David Scott says she's been ridiculed since indecent assault

DAMIAN GEORGE20:35, Jun 19 2018

<https://www.stuff.co.nz/national/crime/104824542/kpiti-coast-councillor-david-scott-fined-1500-for-indecent-assault>



ROSA WOODS/STUFF

David Scott, who was found guilty of thrusting his genitals at a Kāpiti Coast District Council colleague, has been fined \$1500.

The woman indecently assaulted by Kāpiti Coast district councillor David Scott says she has been subject to "victim-shaming" since coming forward about the incident.

Scott, 71, was convicted and fined \$1500 on Tuesday. It was alleged he thrust his genitals against a staff member at a morning tea last year. He pleaded not guilty, but a Wellington District Court jury found him guilty in May.

The victim, whose name is suppressed, told *Stuff* she had faced ridicule from Scott's supporters since the incident, with some leaving female mannequins outside council offices covered in signs that read: "Council PC over the top" and "Do you like my outfit?".



SUPPLIED

Supporters of convicted Kāpiti Coast district councillor David Scott allegedly placed these female mannequins outside the council building.

READ MORE:

- * [Councillor convicted for indecent assault](#)
- * [Councillor 'pressed himself' against staffer](#)
- * ['His behaviour was creepy'](#)
- * [No confidence in councillor](#)

"This has been one of the most difficult years of my life," the victim said.

"I have been under immense pressure. David Scott's behaviour, and that of his supporters, has been revictimisation at its worst.



ROSA WOODS/STUFF

Outside the Wellington District Court, Scott said he would appeal his sentence in a bid to clear his name.

"Knowing the people involved, I guess it shouldn't have surprised me. What surprised me was he [Scott] hasn't condemned their actions."

One of Scott's supporters had been issued a harassment notice by police in relation to the mannequins on display at the council premises, she said.

It also annoyed her that Scott continued to maintain his innocence and claim it was his word against hers, when in fact several witnesses had provided evidence against him during the trial.



JOEL MAXWELL/STUFF

A female staff member said Scott rubbed himself against her at the Kāpiti Coast District Council. (File photo)

"It's a real shame when people can't accept the outcome of the judicial process we have in this country, which is designed to keep all of us safe, and when they compromise the confidence of other victims to come forward."

She was indifferent about Scott's sentence, which she said was "reasonable given his age and health complications".

"A conviction is enough for me. I'm not out for blood."



ROSA WOODS/STUFF

David Scott leaves the Wellington District Court after his sentencing on Tuesday.

Despite the hostility from a small number of Scott's supporters, the victim said she had also received strong support from council management and intended to keep working there.

"I'll wait and see how it pans out over the next month or two..

SCOTT LIKELY TO LOSE COUNCIL SEAT

A judge in the Wellington District Court declined to discharge Scott without conviction on Tuesday, which means the 12-year district councillor will lose his seat.

Outside court, Scott said he would appeal the sentence in a bid to clear his name, claiming his victim lied during the trial.

When asked how he was feeling following the decision, Scott spoke of his ill-health.

"I was in hospital until 7.30pm last [Monday] night. I got a pacemaker two weeks ago inserted."

During the sentencing, Scott's lawyer Mike Antunovic said it seemed inexplicable that Scott would have indecently assaulted a woman in the way alleged, in the presence of so many people.

The judge said the jury must have believed that in the presence of more than 20 people Scott had moved behind the victim, placed his hands on her hips and moved his groin area against her backside.

Scott's penis was measured by a doctor during the trial, in an effort to challenge the woman's evidence about what she could have felt. The measurements were suppressed.

It was suggested what she actually felt was his wallet.

After the trial, it emerged the accounts of two other female employees, who described "unsavoury incidents" by Scott towards them, had been ruled out of the trial. The judge said incidents were nothing like what the first woman had alleged.

After the sentencing, Kāpiti Coast District Council chief executive Wayne Maxwell said what happened next depended on the outcome of Scott's appeal.

"Until the end of that appeal is heard, he will be on a leave of absence. During that time he cannot act as a councillor."

If Scott's appeal was unsuccessful he would be disqualified from office. If that happened before October 12, there would be a by-election, he said.

The court was told that, legally, he could not continue as a councillor if convicted. His position as a justice of the peace was also at risk.

Kāpiti Mayor Gurunathan has said previously that most of Scott's fellow councillors had no confidence in him.

Councillor opposes victim's restraining order, more complaints revealed

Virginia Fallon 18:41, Dec 13 2018

<https://www.stuff.co.nz/dominion-post/news/wellington/109314368/councillor-opposes-victims-restraining-order-more-complaints-revealed>



ROSA WOODS/STUFF

David Scott has agreed to an "informal agreement" that he will not contact his victim or her family.

A judge has asked for an "informal undertaking" that a councillor convicted of indecent assault will not contact his victim or her family.

It comes as it is revealed five other staff complained about Kāpiti Coast councillor David Scott's behaviour before he indecently assaulted his victim.

Scott is appealing the conviction, which formed part of the woman's application for a restraining order, meaning the hearing for a restraining order must wait until after the appeal, Judge Chris Tuohy said.



ROBERT KITCHIN/STUFF

David Scott when he appeared in Wellington District Court on indecent assault charges.

Scott had opposed the application, saying he didn't accept the crime he was convicted of.

READ MORE:

- * [Kapiti councillor found guilty of indecent assault](#)
- * [Jury hears private measurements in Scott trial](#)
- * [David Scott victim says speaking out 'cost everything'](#)

A jury found Scott guilty of indecent assault in May, after he rubbed his genitals against a council staff member during a morning tea at the council's Paraparaumu headquarters last year.



ROSA WOODS/STUFF

Paraparaumu resident Kerry Raymond Bolton, 61, admitted breaching a suppression order by naming Scott's victim on radio.

The 72-year-old was convicted and fined \$1500; his penis was measured by a doctor during the trial in an effort to challenge the woman's evidence about what she could have felt. The measurements were suppressed.

He has been on a paid leave of absence from council while he waits for the appeal, likely to be in March.

The complaints from Kāpiti Coast District Council staff members were never put to Scott, at the request of the complainants, a council spokesman said.



Cr Scott

SUPPLIED

David Scott denied having a Facebook page but he has admitted to sending Facebook messages to his victim's son.

Revealed under the Official Information Act, they date back to February 2015 and the spokesman said council's hands were tied.

"The five staff members did not want their complaints being put to Cr David Scott. As a result the council was unable to take any further action in relation to those complaints."

Scott denied he behaved inappropriately to any staff members.

His victim, who no longer works at council, sought a restraining order to stop him contacting her family.

In Wellington District Court on Wednesday, Judge Tuohy said an informal agreement from both sides "would hold the peace until we can get it to a hearing".

The application was not about Scott's victim but a mutual agreement was "easier to sell", he said.

"Hopefully that will take the heat out of things while we're getting this to court after the criminal proceeding has taken its course."

Scott was at the courthouse but did not enter the courtroom; Kerry Bolton, who [pleaded guilty](#) to breaching the name suppression of Scott's victim, was among his small group of supporters.

Last month Scott [denied](#) having a Facebook page, access to a computer, messaging the victim's son and said he did not contact her ex-husband.

However, in the affidavit opposing his victim's application, he said he did send a Facebook message to the son and approached the ex-husband.

He said he should have instructed a private investigator to make the inquiries and denied harassing the woman. He denied the original crime and claimed he was no longer a councillor.

On Thursday, he claimed he was no longer paid a council salary. Kāpiti Coast District Council confirmed he was still receiving his annual \$35,342 salary.

Following her court appearance, Scott's victim said she couldn't believe he had opposed the restraining order.

"I have to wait until March next year to take the next step in keeping my family safe? How is this even justice?"

She was "disappointed, worn down and exhausted" by the whole process. "If you've done nothing wrong what difference would it make to not contacting someone?"

The council has spent \$16,872 in external legal bills on the matter.

Kerry Bolton discharged without conviction for naming a sex attack victim on radio

16:25, Mar 21 2019

<https://www.stuff.co.nz/national/crime/111424872/kerry-bolton-discharged-without-conviction-for-naming-a-sex-attack-victim-on-radio>



ROSA WOODS/STUFF

Kerry Bolton in court during an earlier appearance.

A Paraparaumu man has been discharged without conviction for illegally naming the victim of a sexual attack by Kāpiti Coast district councillor David Scott on talkback radio.

Kerry Raymond Bolton had originally denied the charge but [changed his plea](#) just before his judge-alone trial was set to begin last year.

Porirua District Court judge Ian Mill on Thursday said the discharge was conditional on him paying reparation of \$1500 to the victim within a month.

He added he did not think the victim would welcome the money, but she was free to donate it if she chose.

READ MORE:

- * [Kerry Bolton denies breaching victim's name suppression](#)
- * [Kerry Bolton pleads guilty to naming councillor's victim on radio](#)
- * [Councillor opposes victim's restraining order application](#)
- * [Councillor's victim says speaking out cost her everything](#)
- * [Kāpiti councillor David Scott found guilty of indecent assault](#)

The judge said he had to proceed on the basis that it could not be proved that Bolton knowingly or recklessly breached the suppression.

He said in a submission Bolton apologised to the court but felt ultimate responsibility lay elsewhere and that he was an easy mark and had been singled out by the vindictive nature of the victim.

"He shows absolutely no remorse for her and her position," the judge said.

He said the victim had ended up giving up her job after being approached in public once her name was used.

Bolton's lawyer Michael Bott said it was an honest mistake.

He said there was no evidence that the suppression on her name was done in open court.

He said it would be unfortunate for Bolton to end up with a conviction - a mark on his record - when under law he had no fault, had no knowledge and was not reckless.

Bott said as a mark of good faith, he offered an emotional harm payment of \$1000 to the victim.



ROSA WOODS/STUFF

Kerry Raymond Bolton in Porirua District Court last year. (File photo)

He said Bolton had apologised when he spoke to police when they showed up at his home.

Police prosecutor Sergeant Paul Macky said it was inconceivable that he did not know about the suppression.

He said he thought the victim would find the offer of \$1000 incredibly insulting.

Last year, a jury found Scott guilty of indecent assault after he rubbed his genitals against a council staff member during a morning tea at the council's Paraparaumu headquarters. He had pleaded not guilty.

He thrust his genitals against a staff member.

His defence had sought to prove she could not have felt Scott's penis by asking for his measurements to be taken to by a doctor on Tuesday and provided to the jury.

Scott, 71, was convicted and fined \$1500 and a judge in the Wellington District Court declined to discharge Scott without conviction. He is appealing the decision. It could mean the loss of his seat on the council.

The woman says she has been subject to "victim-shaming" since coming forward about the incident. She has now applied for a restraining order to stop him contacting her family.

It was revealed at the preliminary hearing for the restraining order that five other staff complained about Scott's behaviour before he indecently assaulted his victim.

Allyship

This example of allyship issues is taken from an article about LGBTIQ inclusion and support. Although the article is not aimed at the wider disability topic, it can be seen that all of these issues, perhaps with a little modification, apply in some way to almost all disability situations.

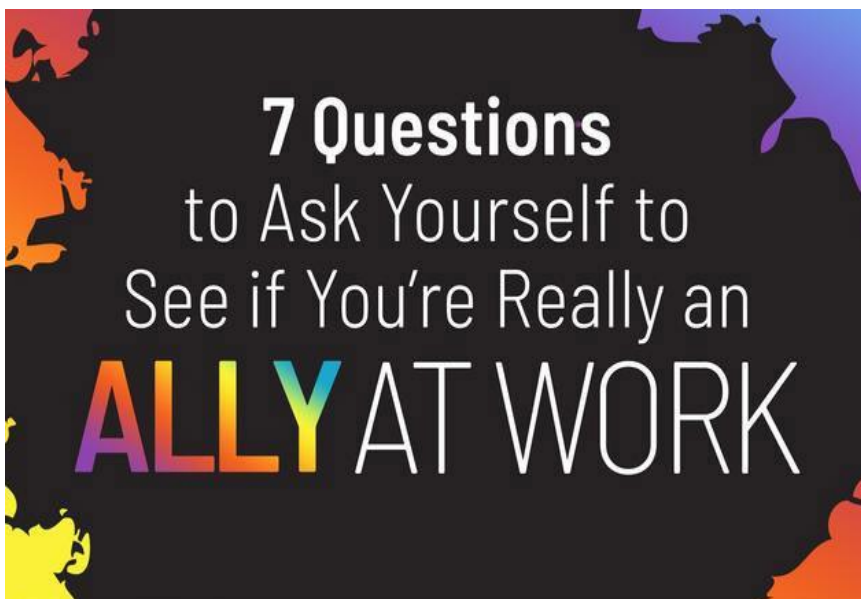
It may take a significant amount of knowledge and thought, to move these types of concepts between different disability areas. Being human, we usually need to have several examples of moving concepts between disability areas, before we can confidently and proficiently do it ourselves. This is why this book includes quite a few examples, to illustrate how to apply learning about one disability, into other disability areas.

Allyship is fairly closely related to advocacy, but is distinctly different. An advocate is asked to support and negotiate on behalf of an individual client and may be paid for doing this work.

An ally is usually not paid. In taking some action, usually in support of a class of people, the ally does expose themselves to some risk and possible cost. The ally knows that they are not in a marginalised situation and as a result they are at much less risk of harm or disadvantage than the marginalised person. When they act, they hope to create positive value, by achieving what would be difficult or impossible for the marginalised person to do for themselves, yet what is sought is simply a just and fair outcome.

>>>>>>>>By not having a marginalised status, they are more likely to be listened to, by the people in power.

<https://www.themuse.com/advice/how-to-be-a-good-ally-at-work-questions>



1

Do you get defensive when a coworker calls you out?

If you get upset, stop and listen, and try to understand the other person's perspective and acknowledge your mistake even if you didn't intend to cause harm.

2

Are you educating yourself?

Are you learning about the challenges that underrepresented groups face, both now and throughout history? And just as important, are you doing so without leaning on someone from one of those groups to help you?

3

Are you willing to use your privilege to help others?

For example, can you be transparent about what you make so coworkers can better understand if they're being paid fairly? And if it turns out a coworker is underpaid, are you willing to speak out?

4

Do you amplify the voices of coworkers?

If someone's ideas are being overlooked in meetings, speak up and acknowledge a good suggestion or achievement. And consider who's not in the meeting at all—and ask that they be included or invite them the next time.

5

Do you hold your colleagues accountable?

If you witness a microaggression (such as misgendering a coworker), don't ignore it. Instead, either address it in the moment or bring it up later to your colleague, who may not realize the hurt they're causing.

6

Do you acknowledge your unconscious bias?

Unconscious biases are stereotypes or attitudes that people form outside of their own awareness. Everyone has them—but not everyone can or wants to admit it. Reflect on why you have them, and challenge yourself to approach situations differently.

7

Are you consistently taking action?

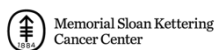
Being an ally is not an item you can check off a to-do list. Rather, it requires ongoing action on your part—both at work and in your everyday life.

the muse



Memorial Sloan Kettering
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Are You a Good Ally at Work? Ask Yourself These Questions to Find Out



by [L'Oreal Thompson Payton](#)



PeopleImages/Getty Images

These days it seems like everyone wants to figure out how to become a better ally. While sharing a message in support of #BlackLivesMatter, attending Pride parades, or donating

to charitable causes are all good starts, the reality is [true allyship](#) takes work—long-term, at times uncomfortable, but necessary work.

According to research from [Lean In](#), more than 80 percent of white employees see themselves as allies to people of color at work, but only 45 percent of Black women and 55 percent of Latinx women agree that they have strong allies in the workplace. And only four in 10 white employees reported speaking out against racial discrimination at work.

What's more, being an ally isn't just about race. It's about using your power or privilege to advocate for all underrepresented groups—including LGBTQ folks, those with disabilities, and anyone else with less power or status than you.

Ask yourself the following questions to help determine whether you're actually an ally—and how you can become an even better one.

1. Do You Get Defensive When a Coworker Calls You Out?

Another way to put this, says Thyannnda Mack, a Chicago-based DEI consultant and founder of [Inclusive Resolutions](#): How do you respond to “ouch”? How do you react when somebody tells you that you have caused harm, or that you're part of a system that is causing harm? It could be something relatively small, like making an insensitive comment, or something a lot bigger, like the fact that everyone you hire looks like you.

“If you're getting upset in the moment, stop and listen, and genuinely thank the person for sharing with you. Then, take time to reflect and revisit the conversation when you are able to address it from a non-defensive place,” suggests Mack. “While it is natural to want to express how you feel about the feedback or your intent, that can come across as making it about you. Instead, try to understand the other person's perspective and acknowledge the harm your words or actions caused regardless of your intent.”

2. Are You Educating Yourself?

Are you working to learn about the challenges that underrepresented groups face, both now and throughout history? And just as important, are you doing so without leaning on someone from one of those groups to help you?

“A lot of time people who want to be allies go to the first marginalized person they know and ask them, what should I do? What should I read? Where should I go?” says Mack. “And that's putting a responsibility and burden on the person who was already burdened.”

Instead, take the initiative to do your own research; there are plenty of books, podcasts, and other resources available that you can find with a quick Internet search. And once you do find resources, consider sharing them with other coworkers.

3. Are You Willing to Use Your Privilege to Help Others?

Learning is important, but do you show up for your colleagues in more concrete ways? For example, you can advocate for pay equity: A simple place to start is to be transparent about what you make (especially if you identify as a white man). This way, coworkers have hard data to understand if they're being paid fairly.

Then, if you discover that there are discrepancies in salaries, are you willing to speak up for fairer compensation for your underpaid coworkers? Keep in mind that multiple privileged voices are better than one. "I also recommend approaching this as a group versus having one person who may be considered 'difficult' advocating for change," she says.

4. Do You Amplify the Voices of Coworkers?

[Structural racism](#) in the workplace is a reality—and it can show up a lot during meetings, when coworkers from underrepresented groups may feel like their ideas are being stifled or overlooked. One easy way to help? Speak up and acknowledge a good suggestion or achievement.

And, as mentioned before, a group has more power than an individual—which is why [the following tactic](#) used by the women in the Obama White House was so powerful when dealing with sexism: "When a woman made a key point, other women would repeat it, giving credit to its author. This forced the men in the room to recognize the contribution—and denied them the chance to claim the idea as their own," according to [Washington Post](#) reporter Juliet Eilperin.

It's also important to look around and consider who's *not* in a meeting—and to suggest they be included or invite them (if you're in a position to do so) the next time.

5. Do You Hold Your Colleagues Accountable?

[Microaggressions](#) (such as [misgendering](#) a co-worker) occur all too often in the workplace—and if you witness them happening, it's easy to brush them off because they seem minor. But to the recipients, these everyday verbal or nonverbal (and at times unintentional) insults have a big impact.

If it makes sense to address it in the moment, go ahead and do so—such as using the correct pronoun if you notice someone using the wrong one, or gently saying "Hey, we don't use that word here" if someone uses an offensive term. (It's not about embarrassing the offender, but about creating a culture where people speak up.) If you can't say anything on the spot, you could mention it later to your colleague, who may not realize the hurt they're causing. (You could even say something like, "You may not have realized it when you said or did this, but..." and explain why whatever they said or did was inappropriate.)

6. Do You Acknowledge Your Unconscious Bias?

Unconscious, or implicit, biases are stereotypes or attitudes that people form outside of their own awareness. Everyone has them—but not everyone can or wants to admit it.

“Challenge yourself to ask yourself why you have bias—but don’t stop at the first ‘why?’ If you keep digging, you’ll end up at some variation of supremacy, privilege, or fragility,” Mack says. “At that point, you have the opportunity to challenge yourself on that way of thinking and approach situations in a new way. After that, continue to repeat the process and assess.”

Try to identify ways that your unconscious biases may be creeping into your work life, and actively work against them. For example, if you’re in a position to assign projects to coworkers, recognize that in general, women—especially women of color—are [more likely to be asked](#) to do things like administrative tasks, while men get to work on more important jobs that help the bottom line. Can you find a way to divide up tasks more fairly?

7. Are You Consistently Taking Action?

Being an ally is not an item you can check off a to-do list. Rather, it requires ongoing action on your part—both at work and in your everyday life. “It’s about showing up over and over again,” says Rachel Thomas, CEO and co-founder of [Lean In](#). “It’s not a moment—it’s a journey.”

Consider how you want to make an impact—whether it’s using your time, skill set, or wallet (or all three!)—to determine how you can invest in others. Can you be a mentor, or get involved in an [employee resource group](#), for example?

Becoming an ally to your co-workers won’t happen overnight, and you may make mistakes along the way. In fact, you definitely will—and that’s OK. The truth is, even if you answered “yes” to each of these questions, there’s always room to improve. The important thing is that you’re willing to put in the work.

5 powerful steps to becoming a better ally

By **Maureen Obatomi**

May 25, 2021 - 21 MIN READ

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<https://www.betterup.com/blog/5-powerful-steps-to-becoming-a-better-ally>



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"A social movement that only moves people is merely a revolt. A movement that changes both people and institutions is a revolution." - Martin Luther King Jr.

On May 25th, 2020, George Floyd, a 46-year-old Black man was murdered in Minneapolis, Minnesota by his arresting officer. His crime? Allegedly using a counterfeit \$20 bill. Within days, the footage of his death had spread like wildfire, broadcast on social media and TV stations around the world. Millions watched in horror, the graphic image of a white police officer kneeling on his neck, while Floyd pleaded for mercy — and onlookers begged the officer to stop.

Disbelief and sorrow exploded into outrage and protests all over the world. On top of the trauma of the pandemic, which had already stretched many to the breaking point, this was the final straw. The Black community had had enough.

What this event unmasked for white onlookers was the stark reality that systemic racism still exists — and still claims lives. For Black people who watched it, the moment represented an accumulation of individual and institutional failures to root out complicit behavior that contributes to injustice in our culture today. Many Black people turned up at work the next day with a heavy heart. They did not know if the pain of what had happened would be felt and acknowledged by their colleagues and leaders of their organizations.

What became clear was that the Black community could no longer try to change individuals and institutions all on their own. For too long, individuals and leaders from majority groups have helped to uphold the status quo by denying racism and avoiding uncomfortable or controversial conversations. However, while silence and apathy are all too normal, they can no longer be accepted as the standard.

Why is it essential to become an ally of marginalized groups at your workplace?

As human beings, we all have the power to stand up for the rights of others. We all have the power to make positive change. And in order for real change to occur, the majority must help support and advocate for the minority. Therefore, the need for allyship to be ingrained in our corporate culture is greater than ever. We need a movement that is able to inspire sustainable change.

So the million-dollar question is “What can I do to help?” Here are 5 powerful steps which include insights and stories to inspire and guide you.

Embrace what it means to become a true, actionable ally

Be human first — lead with empathy, make it personal and be open to change

Get comfortable being uncomfortable

Educate yourself in order to begin to recognise and name what needs to change

Start to stand up and take action!

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Embrace what it means to become a true and actionable ally

In order to become a true ally, it is first of all important to understand and fully embrace what that means. What is an ally? Simply put, **an ally is anyone who supports or empowers another person or group.**

The word **ally** comes from the Latin word “alligare” which means “to bind to.” It is defined as an individual, country, or organization that unites with another in a mutually beneficial friendship. If you have an ally, you have someone who is on your side, stands up for you, and fights for you. Like a couple who gets married or nations in wartime, they will act together and protect one another.

It's often easier to think that being an ally requires big-picture thinking, like planning an event or starting a new project. However, becoming a true and effective ally often requires people to act and speak out inconsistently, day-to-day. It's all about becoming an **actionable ally** — someone who ensures that their words and actions are in sync. This means taking smaller, individual acts that, over time, help to promote a more inclusive environment. By changing the environment, these acts of allyship can have a significant impact. These opportunities are “peppered throughout our work and personal lives”.

Equally important, recognize that allyship isn't a one-off event. It takes consistent work over time and is:

a lifelong process of building relationships based on trust, consistency, and accountability with marginalized individuals and/or groups of people

not self-defined — work and efforts must be recognized by those you are seeking to ally with

an opportunity to grow and learn about ourselves, while building confidence in others

Ways to become a better ally

Ultimately, everyone has the ability to be an ally and use their privilege to support someone whose voice — or experience — might be otherwise stifled.

What does true allyship look like in action, and how can you get started? Here are some tips to get started and make a difference.

Be human first — lead with empathy, make it personal and be open to change

“It is not the job of only Black people to continuously speak against all forms of racism across all industries and all niches — be it institutional, casual, consciously,

or unconsciously. If you are human, this should deeply trigger and concern you irrespective of your race. It is a dagger at humanity.”

Being an ally is not just an intellectual matter. It is a heart matter first and requires a well-developed empathy muscle. Empathy refers to: **the practice of honoring and valuing someone else’s struggle as if it were your own, even if you haven’t been there yourself.**

When I consider the best way to characterize allyship, the first example that comes to mind is Brene Brown's description of empathy.

*“Empathy is connecting with people so we know we’re not alone when we’re in struggle. Empathy is a way to connect to the **emotion** another person is experiencing; it doesn’t require that we have experienced the same situation they are going through”.*

Now reread the description above and replace the word "empathy" with "allyship". This allows you to simplify things and realize that, at the end of the day, being an ally is about being a person first. It is to see and interact with another person's humanity, regardless of ethnicity, gender, or color.

A true ally is motivated by the moral imperative that arises from empathy for another's plight, not by the title or praise. When it comes to allyship in particular, “support” must be provided with care and humility.

Simon, a colleague, of mine demonstrated a great example of empathetic allyship shortly after the news of George Floyd broke. He wrote the following words in a group work chat:

“What a week! What a few weeks in fact -- but the last week since the murder of George Floyd, I have been so sad, in a state of disbelief at how parts of the world have been functioning. I see now that no-one is more privileged than me as a white man. I’ve started the work on understanding more about this (already it’s difficult) what I need to do more of to be shoulder to shoulder with all BIPOC humans on this planet -- actively working towards anti-racism and equality. I can be silent no longer on this issue. That has been my privilege for too long.”

After a week of news reports, this was the first open acknowledgment in this group — and a powerful one at that. As the only Black member in this group, I was touched and encouraged. His statement made me feel heard, understood, and like the realities of my life as a Black person mattered.

Simon’s openness and connection with his humanity also gave others in the group the courage to start speaking up. Someone else shared about their distress and feelings of guilt. Another shared about how their daughter had taken part in a panel discussion at her company on racism in the workplace. The group leaders admitted that they had been fearful of initiating a conversation because I was the only Black person in the group.

Ultimately, Simon's actions led to our group having an open and honest conversation about common racial issues in the workplace. It also provided the opportunity for me to share my experiences as a Black woman within the workplace.

As highlighted in ["The Guide to Allyship"](#) by the writer Amelie Lamont, when you are empathetic as an ally, you are able to:

Take on the struggle as your own.

Transfer the benefits of your privilege to those who lack it.

Amplify voices of the oppressed before your own.

Acknowledge that even though you feel pain, the conversation is not about you.

Stand up, even when you feel scared.

Own your mistakes and de-center yourself.

Understand that your education is up to you and no one else.

So as a **colleague**, how can this story encourage you to become an empathetic ally to your Black colleagues? The key takeaway lessons from this are:

[Own up to your privilege](#)

Lend your voice and speak up in your own social circles

Listen to people's stories

Listen and learn from your Black colleagues' experiences

Ask your Black colleagues "how are you doing" — and follow up!!

Understand that no one wants to be pitied

At the end of the day, being an ally is about being a person first. It is to see and interact with another person's humanity, regardless of ethnicity, gender, or color.

Get comfortable being uncomfortable

In a world where racial bias and microaggressions have been the norm, genuine allyship means courageously showing up where discrimination exists. In reality, this can be very uncomfortable. Defying the cultural standard often entails drawing unwanted attention, risking real consequences, and making sacrifices.

Although many white supporters have expressed personal support for Black Lives Matter, they often struggle to articulate that value and move from theory to action —

especially in the workplace. Instead, they find themselves trapped in performative antiracism.

For example, how many times have we tried to justify a company's non-inclusive messaging by claiming that we're not in the marketing team? Or ignored the fact that the Chief Diversity Officer is the only Black person in executive leadership because we're so far down the hierarchical ladder? Or privately resented a director's disrespectful comments aimed at someone else but failed to speak up about it in public?

The reality is that when we observe or learn about inequities, discrimination, prejudice, or just plain offensive behavior in the workplace, it's easier to try and rationalize what we see and adopt a "not my business" attitude.

What is the main reason for this? Fear. The fear of confrontation and saying the wrong thing can prevent people from addressing issues of race in a constructive manner.

The majority of top leaders are eager for actionable frameworks and advice to create more inclusive cultures in the workplace. However, these leaders are also so terrified about messing up and saying the wrong thing to all their stakeholders that they're often paralyzed into inaction. As a result, they often acquiesce out of fear of confrontation.

In order to effectively tackle this challenge, it is important to recognize that **being an ally is a skill**. You build the capability over time and have to be willing to make mistakes.

Take, for instance, my experience of coaching Tina, an Executive Director on the subject of race. She had originally issued a company statement in reaction to George Floyd's death. However, because it was viewed as corporate and non-feeling, it caused a negative backlash.

According to the feedback she got, her message wasn't specific about racism, it didn't recognize George Floyd as the individual who died, and it didn't acknowledge that people were speaking out about racism in the U.K. and other parts of the world — not just the U.S.

I sat down with her to help her sort through the issues that arose as a result. As she reflected, one thing that came to mind was how difficult it was for her to find the best words to express the organization's willingness to change for the better. She was well aware that, as a white middle-class woman, she didn't completely comprehend what people were going through. It was a major roadblock for her. Consequently, she had oversimplified and skewed her message out of fear of saying the wrong thing.

One of the main pieces of advice I gave Tina was:

“The authenticity with which you show up is going to make the difference in giving people permission to fully show up themselves. It is once people start to connect with you, Tina, as a person, and your why, that they will start to really buy into the realness of this diversity and inclusion conversation about race, and want to contribute in order to make a real change.”

By challenging Tina to connect with her authenticity, she was able to deliver a more heartfelt message in a follow-up staff Q&A session. She clearly expressed her insecurities and fear of knowing how to address this topic justifiably. For Tina, being a true ally at that moment meant openly admitting her ignorance and fears in a vulnerable manner, as well as her desire to learn and make a change. The result was revolutionary. Not only did her address resonate a lot better with all of those in attendance, but it also inspired others to start taking meaningful action across the organization.

A key thing I learned about allyship at that moment is that it involves creating a safe space for all of us to figure things out and voice what we're really feeling — be it Black, white, Asian, etc. As leaders, we need to be able to create safe spaces for people to lean into their discomfort, have uncomfortable conversations, and ask thoughtful questions that help others break out of their paralysis. It is our duty to start the hard work of having these uncomfortable conversations with each other first. In doing so, we build the foundation of trust and openness that is needed to face things head-on moving forward.

So as a **leader**, how can this story encourage you to become an actionable ally to the Black members of your organization? The key takeaway points from this are:

Welcome failure and learn from your mistakes

Acknowledge that racism exists and that it is not ok

Get out of your comfort zone and be intentional about what you say when you speak up

Encourage more frequent discussions and create safe, non-judgemental spaces for open and transparent dialogue about race

Let go of some of the beliefs and value systems that you have in order to unlock a different way of being, thinking and behaving in the organization

Educate yourself in order to begin to recognize and name what needs to change

How do you motivate yourself to determine the appropriate course of action in your current situation? Educating yourself about the realities of racism and discrimination is a good place to start. Before you jump into action with any social justice

campaign, it is important to first learn about the statistics and history behind the movement.

Being an ally extends beyond police brutality. Every aspect of society is impacted by systemic racism. For example, do you know how many Black people there are in your business, city, or country? Are you aware of the statistics on the racial wage disparity? Have you ever considered how your own actions and behaviors could have contributed to discrimination?

In order to effectively begin to see and call out what needs to improve, you must first educate and inform yourself as follows:

Do your homework. Take the time to read, listen, watch and deepen your understanding.

Learn from others about the struggles and obstacles they've faced. Ask permission first before you comment, question, or share.

Approach asking questions with humility and a learning mindset. It is not anyone's responsibility to teach you about racism.

Ask for recommendations if you need them. There are phenomenal resources available that can provide insight into different aspects of systemic racism.

Don't generalize the experiences of your Black co-workers. Recognize that not every member of an underrepresented community has the same experiences. When you get to know a lot of people, you'll notice that they all have different backgrounds and experiences, as well as unique perspectives and intersectional identities.

Start to stand up and take action!

Consider the following: As a man, how many times have you been in a meeting and realized that the woman across from you wanted to say something but wasn't speaking up? As a white woman, how many highly qualified people of color have you known that haven't put themselves forward for promotion because they're afraid they won't be considered? As an economically privileged person, how often do you attend a panel and notice how similar the panelists look?

It's important that people don't just sit on the sidelines in these and other similar situations. Instead, these are the places where you will become a useful ally. And, in order to do so, a vital term to keep in mind is the word "action."

In order to become an actionable ally, your words and actions must be in line. Words without deeds are detrimental and can suppress any organization's ability to improve its culture. If an allyship isn't active, it's really just sideline-cheerleading. Cheerleaders don't move the ball closer to the goal. In order to make a change, it all comes down to matching your words to your behavior and putting your money where your mouth is.

Here are some examples of how you can start to take action and create a positive change within your office environment:

1. Become a confidant

Establish trusting relationships with people of color and let them know that they can confide in you about any prejudices they are facing or feelings they are experiencing.

2. See something, say something

Keep an eye out for racist or sexist remarks and actions, and then take swift and immediate action to shut them down.

When you witness discrimination, don't approach the victim later to offer sympathy. Give him or her your immediate help and support at the moment.

Look out for gaslighting, a form of psychological abuse that causes victims of racist aggression to doubt their own memory and experience.

Intervene whether or not people of color are in the room.

3. Lift others up by advocating

Amplify the voices and messages of Black colleagues. Many minorities in the office are familiar with having their ideas minimized, rejected, or ignored. Offer your clear support and encouragement by repeating their ideas, giving them credit, and offering your clear support.

Bring diversity to the table. [Invite more colleagues from marginalized groups](#) to influential gatherings and encourage them to speak up.

Share important stories and messages from key speakers and writers. Promote others' stories and avoid centering yourself in the conversation.

4. Provide your Black colleagues with opportunities, suggestions, encouragement and support

Mentor. Inquire about the work and aspirations of your Black employees. Sponsor marginalized coworkers. The possibilities of providing support in this manner are endless and doing so opens many doors and opportunities for others that would otherwise be closed to them.

[DIVERSITY & INCLUSION](#)

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Maureen Obatomi

There is no such thing as safe spaces, be realistic

From Safe Spaces to Brave Spaces

A New Way to Frame Dialogue Around Diversity and Social Justice

By *Brian Arao and Kristi Clemens*

THE PRACTICE OF establishing ground rules or guidelines for conversations and behavior is foundational to diversity and social justice

1.. learning activities. As student affairs educators, we expect this process will help create a learning environment that allows students to engage with one another over controversial issues with honesty, sensitivity, and respect. We oftendcscribec such environments as safe spaces, terminology we hope will be reassuring to participants who feel anxious about sharing their thoughts and feelings regarding these sensitive and controversial issues.

But to what extent can we promise the kind of safety our students might expect from us? We have found with increasing regularity that participants invoke in protest the common ground rules associated with the idea of safe space when the dialogue moves from polite to provocative. When we queried students about their rationales, their responses varied, yet shared a common theme: a conflation of safety with comfort. We began to wonder what accounts for this conflation. It may arise in part from the defensive tendency to discount, deflect, or retreat from a challenge. Upon further reflection, another possibility arose. Were we adequately and honestly preparing students to be challenged in this way? Were we in fact hindering our own efforts by relying on the traditional language of safe space?

As we explored these thorny questions, it became increasingly clear to us that our approach to initiating social justice dialogues should not be to convince participants that we can remove risk from the equation, for this is simply impossible. Rather, we propose revising our language, shifting away from the concept of safety and emphasizing the importance of bravery instead, to help students better understand—and rise to—the challenges of genuine dialogue on diversity and social justice issues.

CASE STUDY

We first began to question and rethink the framework of safe space as colleagues working in the Department of Residential Education at New York University. The critical moment that spurred this rethinking occurred when planning and implementing aspects of our fall resident assistant training program. The department approached the task of training our resident assistants on a wide range of content areas before the start of the academic year by developing a series of 90-minute training modules. As members of our department's diversity committee, we were tasked with developing a training module on diversity and social justice. We were excited for an opportunity to channel our passion for social justice education into an important aspect of student leadership yet also challenged by the short session time

frame of 90 minutes. Our intended learning outcomes for this module were ambitious even without the challenge of time constraints. How, we wondered, would we introduce the concepts of social and cultural identity, power, and privilege; encourage reflection on how these forces moved through and shaped their lives; and draw connections between the session content and their roles as student leaders?

Given our goals for the session, we decided to incorporate the One Step Forward, One Step Backward activity, which is also called Levelling the Playing Field and Crossing the Line. In this exercise, participants are lined up in the middle

of the room. The facilitator then reads a series of statements related to social identity, privilege, and oppression; participants determine whether these statements are reflective of their lived experiences and then either step forward, step backward, or remain in place as directed. After all prompts have been read, the facilitator leads a group discussion about their interpretations of the pattern of the distribution of participants in the room. Students who hold primarily dominant group identities usually end up in the front of the room, those who hold primarily target group identities in the rear, and those with a more even split of dominant and target group identities in between the other two groups. The goal of the exercise is to visually illustrate the phenomenon of social stratification and injustice and how participants' own lives are thereby affected. The exercise intentionally pushes the boundaries of the participants' comfort zones in the hope of spurring them on to powerful learning about social justice issues.

After our module on diversity and social justice, we received mixed feedback about the One Step Forward, One Step Backward activity from the student participants and from our colleagues who had served as facilitators for other groups. Some participants reported they experienced heightened awareness of social justice issues as a positive result. Most, however, were critical of the activity. This critical feedback appeared largely dependent on the social identities of the participant and the degree to which their target or agent group identities held salience for them.

Participants who framed the activity primarily through their agent or dominant group identities stated they felt persecuted, blamed, and negatively judged for ending the exercise at the front of the room. Many expressed feelings of guilt about their position in the exercise (though not necessarily their privilege), as well as helplessness when hearing the emotional reactions of those who were closer to the rear of the room. Common reactions included sayings such as, "I can't help being White- and "These problems aren't my fault."

Conversely, those who framed the activity primarily through their target group identities ended up in the back of the room. Many of these participants stated their physical position at the conclusion of the exercise was a painful reminder of the oppression and marginalization they experience on a daily basis. Whereas their agent group peers expressed surprise at the pattern of distribution, many of the target group participants stated they predicted the result of the activity from the beginning. Like their agent group peers, the target group participants voiced frustration with the activity, though their feelings tended to stem from a sense of being placed in the familiar role of educator for agent group members—a role they felt was inevitably theirs but one that made them feel angry, sorrowful, and in some cases, afraid of the repercussions.

Interestingly, a critique shared by many participants across target and agent group identities was that they experienced the activity as a violation of the safe space ground rules established with each participant group at the outset of the module. The profound feelings of discomfort many of them experienced were, in their view, incongruent with the idea of safety.

It was apparent to us that on the whole our session had missed the mark with respect to our intended outcomes, sparking the first of many long discussions between us. Although it was tempting to simply lump the critiques together as the typical resistance you can expect when talking to folks about power and privilege, we knew this was an oversimplification that would not result in improved pedagogical practice or richer learning for our students. What was the critical flaw in our design? Did we select the wrong activities or place them in the wrong sequence? Did we do a poor job of training our colleagues to facilitate the session? While mining these questions resulted in some useful insights—for example, we no longer use the One Step Forward activity as part of our facilitation practice, primarily because we are troubled by its potential to revictimize target group members—we continually returned to the quandary of safe space. Was it the activity that had made our students feel unsafe, or did this sense of danger originate somewhere else? It was here that we began to more closely examine the conventional wisdom of safety as a prerequisite for effective social justice education and question to what degree the goal of safety was

realistic, compatible, or even appropriate for such learning. What is meant by the concept of safety, and how does that change based on the identities in the room?

DEFINING AND DECONSTRUCTING SAFE SPACE

Many scholars have described visions of safe space as it relates to diversity and social justice learning environments. Among them are Holley and Steiner (2005), who described safe space as an "environment in which students are willing and able to participate and honestly struggle with challenging issues" (p. 49). Staff at the Arizona State University Intergroup Relations Center described the contours of safe space in more detail, with a stated objective of creating "an environment in which everyone feels comfortable expressing themselves and participating fully, without fear of attack, ridicule, or denial of experience" (as cited by National Coalition for Dialogue & Deliberation, n.d., §5). To create such spaces, "participants need some basic discussion guidelines in order to develop trust and safety" (Hardiman, Jackson, & Griffin, 2007, p. 54).

Consistent with the literature, we believe facilitators of social justice education have a responsibility to foster a learning environment that supports participants in the challenging work of authentic engagement with regard to issues of identity, oppression, power, and privilege. Student development theorists assert that to support this kind of learning, educators must take care to balance contradiction to a student's current way of thinking with positive encouragement to explore new ways of thinking (Baxter Magolda, 1992; Kegan, 1982; King & Kitchener, 1994; Sanford, 1966). Further, we share the conviction that violence of any kind—physical, emotional, and psychological—is antithetical to the aims of social justice work; indeed, we see the use of violence to achieve one's goals as a patriarchal norm that should be challenged through such work. As such, we see great value in many of the tenets of safe space as well as the common practice of setting expectations, often called ground rules, with the learning group regarding how we will engage with one another on these subjects.

We question, however, the degree to which safety is an appropriate or reasonable expectation for any honest dialogue about social justice. The word safe is defined in the Merriam-Webster Online Dictionary as "free from harm or risk . . . affording safety or security from danger, risk, or difficulty unlikely to produce controversy or contradiction" (Safe, 2010).

We argue that authentic learning about social justice often requires the very qualities of risk, difficulty, and controversy that are defined as incompatible with safety. These kinds of challenges are particularly unavoidable in participant groups composed of target and agent group members. In such settings, target and agent group members take risks by participating fully and truthfully, though these risks differ substantially by group membership and which identities hold the most salience for a given participant at a given time.

For agent group members, facing evidence of the existence of their unearned privilege, reflecting on how and to what degree they have colluded with or participated in oppressive acts, hearing the stories of pain and struggle from target group members, and fielding direct challenges to their world-view from their peers can elicit a range of negative emotions, such as fear, sorrow, and anger. Such emotions can feed a sense of guilt and hopelessness. Choosing to engage in such activity in the first place, much less stay engaged, is not a low-risk decision and, therefore, is inconsistent with the definition of safety as being free of discomfort or difficulty.

Indeed, the unanticipated discomfort and difficulty many agent group members experience as a result of participation in a social justice learning activity can also lead to resistance and denial. Here, the truth of how power and privilege have moved in one's life is rejected, and energy is redirected toward critiquing the activity (rather than the content) as the source of her or his discomfort or explaining away others' experiences as springing not from oppression but from some other more benign source, disconnected from oneself. In this manner, the language of safety may actually encourage entrenchment in privilege, which we may be able to curtail more effectively by

building conditions in which agent group members understand and expect from the outset that challenge is forthcoming.

Further, it is our view that the agent group impulse to classify challenges to one's power and privilege as actions that detract from a sense of safety is, in itself, a manifestation of dominance. For example, Wise (2004), in his essay critiquing Whites' insistence on safety as a condition of their participation in a cross-racial dialogue about racism, describes this expectation as "the ultimate expression of White privilege" (If 15), whereby Whites attempt to define for others—and especially people of color—how they wish to be confronted about issues of race and racism. People of color are then expected to constrain their participation and interactions to conform to White expectations of safety—itself an act of racism and White resistance and denial. In this manner, we suggest that the language of safety contributes to the replication of dominance and subordination, rather than a dismantling thereof. This assertion does not mean we believe anything goes is a better approach; rather, we suggest we do participants a disservice by reinforcing expectations shaped largely by the very forces of privilege and oppression that we seek to challenge through social justice education.

Members of the target group are even more disserved by well-intentioned efforts to create safety. Target group members may, in fact, react with incredulity to the very notion of safety, for history and experience has demonstrated clearly to them that to name their oppression, and the perpetrators thereof, is a profoundly unsafe activity, particularly if they are impassioned (Leonardo & Porter, 2010). They are aware that an authentic expression of the pain they experience as a result of oppression is likely to result in their dismissal and condemnation as hypersensitive or unduly aggressive (Sparks, 2002). This dilemma looms large for target group members in any social-justice-related learning activity; reflecting on and sharing their direct experiences with oppression, and listening to dominant group members do the same, will likely result in heightened pain, discomfort, and resentment. These feelings alone are inconsistent with the definition of safety and exacerbated by ground rules that discourage them from being genuinely voiced lest they clash with agent group members' expectations for the dialogue.

Indeed, the pervasive nature of systemic and institutionalized oppression precludes the creation of safety in a dialogue situated, as it must be, within said system. As Wise (2004) observed with respect to race, "This country is never safe for people of color. Its schools are not safe; its streets are not safe; its places of employment are not safe; its health care system is not safe" (IT 35).

Though Wise focuses on racism, we argue that his formulation about safety can also be applied to examinations of sexism, homophobia, heterosex-ism, ableism, religio-spiritual oppression, ageism, U.S.-centrism, and other manifestations of oppression. Viewed through this lens, we see that assurances of safety for target group members are just as misguided as they are for agent group members.

We have come to believe, as argued by Boostrom (1998), that we cannot foster critical dialogue regarding social justice by turning the classroom into a "safe space", a place in which teachers rule out conflict. . . We have to be brave [emphasis added] because along the way we are going to be "vulnerable and exposed"; we are going to encounter images that are "alienating and shocking". We are going to be very unsafe. (p. 407)

BRAVE SPACE: AN ALTERNATIVE FORMULATION AND FACILITATION PRACTICE

As we developed alternatives to the safe space paradigm, we were influenced by Boostrom's (1998) critique of the idea of safe space, and in particular his assertion that bravery is needed because "learning necessarily involves not merely risk, but the pain of giving up a former condition in favour of a new way of seeing things- (p. 399). Some scholars have suggested that pedagogies of fear (Leonardo & Porter, 2010) or discomfort (Boler, 1999; Redmond,

2010) are in closer practical and philosophical alignment with this kind of learning. Although these provocative theories were useful to us, our primary inspiration was from the concept of "courageous conversations about race"

(Singleton & Hays, 2008; Singleton & Linton, 2006; Sparks, 2002), a strategy developed specifically to encourage taking risks in dialogues focused on the topic of race and racism. These ideas affirmed our decision to make a small but important linguistic shift in our facilitation practice, whereby we seek to cultivate brave spaces rather than safe spaces for group learning about a broad range of diversity and social justice issues. By revising our framework to emphasize the need for courage rather than the illusion of safety, we better position ourselves to accomplish our learning goals and more accurately reflect the nature of genuine dialogue regarding these challenging and controversial topics.

We have found that the simple act of using the term brave space at the outset of a program, workshop, or class has a positive impact in and of itself, transforming a conversation that can otherwise be treated merely as setting tone and parameters or an obligation to meet before beginning the group learning process into an integral and important component of the workshop. Brave space is usually a novel term for our students or participants, especially those who are familiar with the idea of safe space, and frequently piques their curiosity. In response, we often ask participants why they think we use the term brave space instead of safe space, with the goal of involving their critical lenses immediately. It is common for participants to respond by unpacking the idea of safety much like we did as we developed the brave space framework. Creating this space for the participants to make their own meaning of brave space, in addition to sharing our own beliefs as facilitators, can lead to rich learning in alignment with our justice-related objectives.

This process of actualizing brave space in a social justice learning activity continues, appropriately, with the establishment of ground rules. There are many different techniques for establishing ground rules. Often, the mode selected is dependent upon the total amount of time allotted for the learning activity. If time is restively short, the facilitators may choose to advance predetermined list of ground rules to preserve limited discussion time for other aspects of the activity. Alternatively, when time permits, facilitators may lead a conversation in which the participants generate their own list of ground rules. A hybrid version of both approaches is another possibility, whereby the facilitators suggest some ground rules and invite participants to ask questions about these as well as share additional ground rules of their own. In any case, facilitators will likely seek commitment from the group to adhere to these ground rules throughout the activity, although they may also indicate the rules can be revisited and revised as needed as the activity progresses.

We strongly encourage facilitators who use the brave space framework to strive for protracted dialogue in defining brave space and setting ground rules, treating this conversation not as a prelude to learning about social justice but as a valuable part of such learning. We have found that so doing allows us as facilitators to demonstrate openness to learning from participants, thereby disrupting and decentering dominant narratives in which knowledge flows one way from teachers to students. A collectivist approach, wherein all participants have the opportunity to shape the group norms and expectations, is more consistent with the overall goal of social justice education than one in which the facilitators dictate the terms of learning (Freire, 1970; hooks, 1994).

Whatever methodology is used to create ground rules, commonly used ground rules include "agree to disagree," "don't take things personally," "challenge by choice," "respect," and "no attacks." We believe that unexamined, these common ground rules may contribute to the conflation of safety and comfort and restrict participant engagement and learning. In the section that follows, we discuss these common ground rules and characteristics of safe spaces. We also offer some alternatives and examples for processing the complexity of these guidelines that are more consistent with social justice education goals and the establishment of brave spaces. In setting up guidelines for social justice conversations, we aim to encourage participants to be brave in exploring content that pushes them to the edges of their comfort zones to maximize learning. We offer all of these to support facilitators in thinking critically about how ground rules can help or hinder students in full and truthful engagement.

Common Rule Agree to disagree. Implicit in this common ground rule is that disagreements often occur in dialogues about diversity and social justice. We welcome the voicing of disagreement and encourage students to offer contrasting views. However, we believe that Agreeing to disagree can be used to retreat from conflict in an attempt to avoid discomfort and the potential for damaged relationships. We often hear students say, "I'm not going to change my mind, and neither are they; what is the point of continuing to talk?" In our view, some of the richest learning springs from ongoing explorations of conflict, whereby participants seek to understand an opposing viewpoint. Such exploration may or may not lead to a change or convergence of opinions or one side winning the debate, but neither of these is among our objectives for our students; we find these outcomes to be reflective of a patriarchal approach to conflict, in which domination and winning over others to one's own point of view is the goal.

Further, we believe that agreeing to disagree in a conversation about social justice not only stymies learning for all participants, it can also serve to reinforce systems of oppression by providing an opportunity for agent group members to exercise their privilege to opt out of a conversation that makes them uncomfortable. Consider, for example, a workshop focused on the topic of sexism. The participants are engaging in a lively and contentious discussion about how sexism has an impact on leadership and employment opportunities for women in the United States. Many of the women, and some of the men, in the room have shared statistics indicating that women are underrepresented in positions of leadership and still paid less than men for the same work. Most of the men in the room contest this view and offer high-profile examples of women who have "made it." Weary of the back-and-forth conflict, the men invoke the rule of agreeing to disagree. The conversation is halted, and the result is that the system of sexism that continues to confer unearned privileges to men and restrict freedom and opportunities for women is left unexamined. This outcome is harmful for all involved, but women carry the largest part of that burden.

An alternative rule is needed, one that inspires courage in the face of conflict and continues rather than stops the dialogue process. Without such a guideline, we are compromised in our ability to facilitate learning that advances social justice for all people. To this end, we suggest that facilitators explore the concept of controversy with civility and how it may prove a stronger fit with the goal of dialogue. Controversy with civility, a term drawn from the social change model of leadership development (Astin & Astin, 1996), is "a value whereby different views are expected and honored with a group commitment to understand the sources of disagreement and to work cooperatively toward common solutions" (p. 59). We find this proposed rule to be in much closer alignment with our philosophy of social justice education than agreeing to disagree. It frames conflict not as something to be avoided but as a natural outcome in a diverse group. Moreover, it emphasizes the importance of continued engagement through conflict and indicates that such activity strengthens rather than weakens diverse communities.

As we discuss later, it is important to note that the word civility, in our view, allows room for strong emotion and rigorous challenge. It does not require target group members to restrain their participation to prevent agent group members from disengaging. It does, however, require target and agent group members to be attentive to the ways patriarchal societies socialize their members to view aggression and dominance as normative means to approach conflict and to use care to avoid replicating oppressive behaviors while engaged in the pursuit of justice for all people.

Common Rule 2: Don't take things personally. We see this often-used rule as closely related to two other common rules: no judgments and it's okay to make mistakes. Invoking these rules seems to be intended to encourage participants to become involved dispassionately to maintain safety in the learning environment—in other words, safe spaces. Moreover, it also primes participants for the inevitability of missteps while they are exploring social justice issues. These rules may be very reassuring to participants who are concerned that at some point in the activity they will betray ignorance attributable to one of their agent group memberships and do not wish to be labeled or dismissed by their peers as sexist, racist, ableist, and so forth. So reassured, they may participate and engage with less fear and greater honesty.

We share the desire for authenticity and see value in the acknowledgment that human beings are imperfect and should not be expected to behave otherwise. However, we have a number of problems with the use of these rules to ground a social justice dialogue. First, they fail to account for another truth we hold about human beings: although we have some choice in how we respond to and express our emotions, we do not have control over which Ones we experience at any given time and to what degree. We suggest that the view we can and should demonstrate such control is reflective of patriarchy, whereby emotional restraint—a normatively masculine behavior—is unjustly overvalued.

Further, we argue that these rules shift responsibility for any emotional impact of what a participant says or shares to the emotionally affected people. Those affected are now expected to hide their feelings and process them internally; the rules may even imply to these participants that their feelings are because of some failing on their part. According to the rules, the affected parties are only permitted to react outwardly in a manner that does not imply negative judgment of the participant who has caused the impact, lest this person be shamed into silence. The affected people are in this way doubly affected—first by the event that triggered their emotions and then again by the responsibility for managing them. These rules also prevent the person who caused the impact from carrying a share of the emotional load and preclude the possibility of meaningful reflection on her or his actions.

In our analysis, these rules do not protect any participants' safety and certainly not that of the target group members, who are more often than not the affected and silenced participants. Rather, they preserve comfort for agent group members, who may allow their power and dominance to show without having it reflected to them and without being held accountable for it. We are careful here to avoid saying that agent group members are served by such a rule; we believe it protects their privilege, but in so doing it also does them a disservice. None of these outcomes is consistent with our view of social justice, so we choose different language—own your intentions and your impact—to ground our pedagogy. This language acknowledges that intention and impact matter. It also makes clear that the impact of our actions is not always congruent with our intentions and that positive or neutral intentions do not trump negative impact.

For example, in a conversation about gender expression, gender normative or cisgender people (those whose gender expression aligns with dominant social expectations of their biological sex) may inadvertently cause pain to transgender participants by expressing incredulity about how a biologically male person could be a woman. If the trans participants have been supported in choosing to approach controversy with civility by letting it be known they have been harmed and why, there are now opportunities where silence would have left only closed doors and untouched systems of oppression. The trans participants have not been forced, as is so often the case, into silence but rather have exercised agency by participating truthfully. The gender normative participants are aware they have caused harm and can seek to better understand how and why they did so and what role their privilege as gender normative people has played in creating the gap between intention and impact. All participants, if they so choose, can better explore with one another ways to challenge the social scripts that frame gender as binary and essentially as indistinguishable from biological sex. These results would have been discouraged in an environment in which the trans students were directed to not take things personally.

Common Rule 3: Challenge by choice. This guideline emerged in the field of adventure education and outdoor learning and has since been widely applied in social justice education. Challenge by choice means individuals will determine for themselves if and to what degree they will participate in a given activity, and this choice will be honored by facilitators and other participants (Neill, 2008). The principle of challenge by choice highlights what we view as an important truth in social justice education. Though a given activity or discussion question may provide a challenging opportunity for participant learning, much of that learning may be internal. Students may not externalize evidence of the degree to which they are engaged, but this does not mean they are not wrestling with difficult questions or critically examining how privilege moves in their lives and the lives of others. Further, we recognize this kind of engagement cannot be forced. As facilitators, we might make a pointed observation or pose a provocative

question in hopes of spurring such engagement. For example, during a conversation about the controversy over same-sex marriage, we might say, "We notice that only folks who have identified as lesbian or gay have said anything in this conversation; we'd like to invite anyone who identifies normatively with respect to sexual orientation to share their thoughts." However, we understand it is ultimately in the participants' hands to decide whether they respond and to what extent they will push the boundaries of their comfort zones.

Given this reality we believe it is important to do more than simply affirm it by establishing challenge by choice as a ground rule. We believe it is also necessary to actively encourage participants to be aware of what factors influence their decisions about whether to challenge themselves on a given issue. We see this awareness as being particularly important for agent group members. Returning to our example of the same-sex marriage conversation, silence from heterosexual participants could signify any number of things. Some of them might have been thinking deeply about what it means to their being able to enter a civil marriage with their chosen partner, while others could not. Some might have even been formulating a thought to share with the group. Some might have been very uncomfortable with the topic and decided they were unable to rise to the challenge of discussing it.

In the latter case, it is our hope the internal process does not stop at the decision not to accept the challenge. Therefore, when discussing challenge by choice, we also ask participants to think about what keeps them from challenging themselves. Do they hold what they believe is an unpopular viewpoint? Are they fearful of how others will react to their thoughts? Are they simply tired and not able to formulate a thoughtful contribution that day? 'Whatever the reason. we hope our participants will be attentive to it.

We encourage participants to be especially attentive to the degree to which their agent group memberships inform their decision about whether and how deeply to engage in a challenging activity or dialogue. Specifically, we suggest they consider how their daily lives are affected if they choose not to challenge themselves. and hr contrast, how target group members' daily lives are affected In' the same decision. If they come to suspect or clearly see their privilege enables them to make the choice not to challenge themselves, and that oppression often invalidates such a choice for target group members, we hope this knowledge factors into their decisions about how and when they choose to challenge themselves.

Common Rule 4: Respect. Of all the common rules, we have experienced this one as the least controversial and the least discussed. When respect is offered as a ground rule, most of our participants agree readily that it should be adopted—they want to be respected, and they want to be respectful to others--and move quickly on to the next point of discussion.

We believe it is important to spend more time discussing respect with the group. We often ask them what respect looks like: How does someone demonstrate respect for you? Delving into this question can reveal various cultural understandings of the term and mitigate assumptions participants bring with them about what kinds of behaviors are respectful. For example, participants will often say that interrupting someone who is speaking is a form of disrespect. As facilitators, we use this as an opportunity to demonstrate multipartiality (see Chapter 10) by affirming this particular understanding but also by acknowledging that in some cultural contexts interruption and talking over one another is welcome; we then invite participants to share any examples they might have from their own experiences. The objective here is not to lead participants to consensus but rather to support them in maintaining increased mindfulness of the different ways they can demonstrate respectfulness to one another.

We also circle back to the idea of controversy with civility when conversing about respect. Specifically, we ask participants to give an example of how they might firmly challenge the views of someone else in a respectful manner. By further discussing the examples, the group can develop more clarity about ways to firmly and respectfully challenge others and how to respond when they themselves are firmly and respectfully challenged. Such discussion is a potentially fruitful investment of time that can prevent students from automatically experiencing and interpreting challenges from others as acts of disrespect.

creating brave spaces the previous rule of respect.

Many of our students have described attacks as a form of extreme disrespect, a view we agree with and connect directly to our rejection of any form of violence as a viable means for advancing social justice. As with respect, we find this rule is usually agreed to speedily and, in the absence of facilitator intervention, without discussion.

Here again, we advocate for clarifying conversation. We typically ask our participants to describe the differences between a personal attack on an individual and a challenge to an individual's idea or belief or statement that simply makes an individual feel uncomfortable. These examples are always very instructive. Most of the examples participants identify clearly as attacks—"You're a jerk," "Your idea is worthless," and so on—have never actually occurred in any session we have facilitated. However, those that are classified during this conversation as challenges—"What you said made me feel angry," "I find that idea to be heterosexist," and so on—are ones that in our experience are regularly named as attacks later on by the recipients of the challenges. At this point, we have found it helpful to remind participants of the group's responses during this portion of the ground rules discussion; doing so has helped participants remember that pointed challenges are not necessarily attacks, but the uncomfortable experience that may result can sometimes lead to a defensive reaction. The attention can then be turned away from the distraction of the nonattack and toward the roots of the defensive response—more often than not, a sense of threat to the privileges of one's agent group membership.

CONCLUDING THOUGHTS

We have found that reframing ground rules to establish brave space is an asset to us in our work as social justice facilitators. It has helped us to better prepare participants to interact authentically with one another in challenging dialogues. Moreover, as compared to the idea of safe space, brave space is more congruent with our understanding of power, privilege, and oppression, and the challenges inherent in dialogue about these issues in socioculturally diverse groups. The feedback we have received from attendees at presentations (Arao & Clemens, 2006) and participants in workshops we facilitate—including students, staff, and faculty—has been universally positive, and many have requested our assistance in learning and using the brave space framework in their own practice. Still, we recognize that brave space remains a relatively new framework with ample room for growth and refinement. Our evidence of its efficacy is primarily anecdotal. We believe qualitative and quantitative studies would be useful in measuring how brave space is experienced by participants in social justice educational efforts and how it influences their learning and participation in these settings. Further, we welcome your additional philosophical and theoretical analysis of the framework as articulated here, as we know that others will see and understand the strengths and shortfalls of brave space in ways we, as yet, do not. We look forward to continued engagement with you in our shared journey to develop ever more efficacious social justice facilitation practices.

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<https://theconversation.com/the-psychology-of-being-a-better-ally-in-the-office-and-beyond-140902>

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In recent interviews, the American soccer player Crystal Dunn expressed the joy and fear she felt when her teammate Megan Rapinoe decided to take a knee against police brutality and racism in 2016. While Dunn wanted to join her teammate she worried “they could rip up [her] contract” and as a result chose not to.

The fact that Rapinoe felt she could take a knee while Dunn could not speaks volumes. The US Soccer Federation did condemn Rapinoe’s kneeling. However, Dunn was worried the repercussion would be worse for her as a black player.

Psychologists have found that when a black person confronts a racist remark they are seen as “rude”, but when a white person does the same they are perceived as “persuasive”. Similarly, when black people pushed for a diversity initiative they were

seen as self-interested. While white people who did the same were “objective”. If people of colour and women showed they valued diversity at work, they received worse performance ratings from their boss. However, white men who did the same weren’t punished.



Megan Rapinoe and Crystal Dunn of US and Kadidiatou Diani of France. [CHRISTOPHE PETIT TESSON/EPA](#)

Although white people, particularly men, are less likely to be punished for pushing anti-racism, they often shy away from it. They think it’s not their place, they don’t want to seem impolite and it can make them feel profoundly uncomfortable. As a result, this difficult work gets outsourced to people of colour. For instance, when something racist is said, psychologists have found that white people look towards the black person in the room. This creates a double burden where people of colour suffer discrimination and then are saddled with calling it out.

Uncertain Allies

Research has found that being a better ally is one way white employees can stand against racism at work. Allies are people from a group who don't suffer discrimination but who provide support to those who are discriminated against.

Allyship at work can have many potential benefits. It can foster positive inter-group connections, undermine racism and other forms of oppression and build a more positive workplace culture.

However, allyship has some dangerous pitfalls. Well-meaning allies can burden others with requests to talk about traumatic experiences they haven't shared. There is also the danger of "performative allies" who publicly show their support for a cause, but only for a short time. Would-be allies are sometimes more interested in dealing with their own "white guilt" than effectively helping the movement. There is also a danger that allies end up crowding out the very people they hoped to support from the movement.



Effective allyship can lead to a more open and collaborative workplace culture. [GaudiLab/Shutterstock](#)

Being a better ally

Being an effective ally is a skill like any and takes time to hone. Fortunately, recent research has started to point out some rules of thumb that are useful for would-be allies.

1. Listening

Becoming a better ally starts with deep listening. Recent work by business school professor Stephanie Creary has found that good allies begin by carefully looking and noticing the differences and similarities between themselves and others. For instance, understanding white privilege and listening to the experiences and needs of others. Only after that, do they engage in allyship, appreciating the values of these differences and acting accordingly.

2. Self-reflection

Allies take time to reflect on their own biases. The psychologist Leslie Ashburn-Nardo points out that “most allies are not bias-free”. Rather, allies are more likely to be aware of the gap between what they should do and what they actually do and work towards closing that gap.

3. Bigger goals

A recent study by the psychologist Taylor Phillips found that allies who are motivated by goals that transcended themselves and were about wider social transformation were more likely to affect meaningful change than those who are driven by more selfish motives. So those who want to help call out systems of oppression to dismantle them for all rather than doing so to look good.

4. Building trust

A study led by organisational researcher Jun Won Park found that allies were seen more favourably if they invested in building trust and overtime and didn't take up high-profile public roles. Trust can be built by understanding the issues faced, acting selflessly, making sacrifices for the group and remaining loyal to that group over time.

5. Taking action

Finally, one of the most important roles that would-be allies can play is educating and challenging members of their own group. This can be seen in a study by Ronni Greenwood. She asked why it was that after nearly 80 years, the city council of Tulsa, Oklahoma recognised and gave reparations for an outbreak of violence in 1921 during which hundreds were killed and a thriving black neighbourhood was destroyed. Greenwood found that emotional testimonies from white allies of the black movement played a crucial role in getting the predominantly white city council to do something. This study suggests that sometimes the best way to be an ally is challenging people in their own group, even if it is uncomfortable.

Why it is unworkable to ask a Marginalised Person to Advocate for their Group – the role of Ally

The biggest issue is whether the group to be addressed will see the speaker as “OTHER”?

If they do, then the marginalised speaker is wasting their time and wasting their energy and damaging their own life for no advantage to no one.

The person making the request should think very carefully whether the audience will be willing to listen openly? This might sound straightforward, but it is likely that the person asking is less prejudiced and many of the audience may be more prejudiced?

The person asking should be delivering the speech as an Ally.

The audience might, only might be more willing to listen to the Ally speaking. Also, depending on levels of prejudice in the wider audience, maybe it is better not to give the speech at all?

The article below makes these points in subtle ways. You may need to read it very carefully, to pick up these points.



Tom Matlack asked his friend Steve Locke to write for us about race. He declined. Here's why.

<https://goodmenproject.com/ethics-values/why-i-dont-want-to-talk-about-race/>

Dear Tom,

Thanks so much for asking me to contribute something to GMP. It has been exciting to see how this project has gone from an idea to a reality.

As much as I enjoy reading GMP and as much as I'd love to be a part of it, I don't think I am able to write about race.

It's not that I don't know anything about it. I was on a social media site and I was looking at the post one of my friends shared. He was lamenting the fact that PSYCHOLOGY TODAY had printed an article saying that black women are "objectively" less attractive than other women. Others of his friends posted on his "wall," saying that attractiveness was relative and that it was based on symmetry of features and the like. I posted a "sigh" and said that it was sickmaking, in 2011, that someone would even create a study to investigate humans in such a way, that the creation of the study was evidence of a bias, and the notion that peoples' "tastes" and "preferences" are not affected by 300+ years of racialized bias was ignorant. Also, I have been told that black people are somehow deficient for most of my 48 years and that PSYCHOLOGY TODAY was passing this crap off as research was sad.

A poster responded that he didn't see any racism in the research and that it was like comparing apples and oranges. He also told me that too many people say things are about race when they aren't, and that maybe I was upset to be on the "losing" side of the article. He wanted me to explain why I thought the article was racist.

I told him that it is not my job to educate him about the experience of race in his own country, although as his darker countryman, I am called on to do just that. I told him that like most ostensibly white people his age, he wanted to locate a reason for thing in his own experience, probably so he would not have to have bad feelings about history, or have to acknowledge the privileges and benefits that he has received for nothing that he has done.

I am a college professor, however, so I gave him some texts that to read that would take him from Reconstruction to the current moment in culture and history. I told him that these would help him develop an understanding of how the caste system of the United States is racialized, and that the understanding of the American experience is structured through the creation, implementation, and sustenance of the racial boundaries through policy and culture.

Here's the list:

W.E.B. DuBois BLACK RECONSTRUCTION

Ronald Takaki A DIFFERENT MIRROR

Eric Lott LOVE AND THEFT

Noel Ignatiev HOW THE IRISH BECAME WHITE

Ward Churchill and Jim Vander Wall AGENTS OF REPRESSION: The FBI's Secret Wars Against the Black Panther Party and the American Indian Movement

Alexander Saxton THE RISE AND FALL OF THE WHITE REPUBLIC

(B)ell hooks BLACK LOOKS

Andrew Hacker TWO NATIONS: BLACK AND WHITE, SEPARATE, HOSTILE, UNEQUAL

The poster advised me that I was being racist by saying “most ostensibly white people.” I advised that I was going solely by his phenotype, which is what people do with me. I also told him to look up “ostensibly” and “racist.”

So you see, it’s not that I don’t know anything about the subject.

Tom, I don’t want to talk about race because it gives weight to a fiction that was created to oppress. It has no basis in biology and is a social construction in this country that was engineered to maintain access to free labor. The fiction created by race distorts the reality in which we live.

Plus, as a black person, I am called on often to speak for my “race.” I can never give an opinion without it being assumed to be that of a multitude. So when a white person asks me my opinion about an issue that can be related to race, I suspect that there is going to be a moment later when that white person is going to say, “Well, I have a black friend, Steve, who says...” And that will be the black authority on the subject.

Black people can’t talk to white people about race anymore. There’s really nothing left to say. There are libraries full of books, interviews, essays, lectures, and symposia. If people want to learn about their own country and its history, it is not incumbent on black people to talk to them about it. It is not our responsibility to educate them about it. Plus whenever white people want to talk about race, they never want to talk about themselves. There needs to be discussion among people who think of themselves as white. They need to unpack that language, that history, that social position and see what it really offers them, and what it takes away from them. As James Baldwin said, “As long as you think that you are white, there is no hope for you.”

When you went to Africa, you said “you were the minority for the first time in your life.” That’s not true. You have been the only adult in a room full of children, the only man in room full of women, the only non-incarcerated person in a jail. In America if you were a minority at a hip-hop concert in Compton, you would still have the privilege that accrues unbidden to persons designated as white, with all of the political, social, and economic access that comes with it.

What you experienced in Africa, Tom, was that the apparatus that supports the dominance of white skin was absent. It has nothing to do with being a minority someplace, you were free of the prison that is whiteness in America. You could have brought all that privilege with you and manifested it when you saw Cole with Protus, but you didn’t. Letting go of that allowed you to show Cole that he can connect with another person independent of the color of their skin.

Do you remember how Clinton was vilified for wanting to have a national conversation on race? People thought it was unnecessary, that he was a “race traitor,” that it would lead to reparations for slavery, that it would make white people feel bad for things that were not their fault. White people don’t want to hear about race because they don’t want to be called “racists” or they cannot see how they are responsible for something they didn’t do. That report talks a lot about white privilege. It was no surprise to me that it was not widely read and discussed.

Whiteness to me is oppression. And it oppresses not just black people, but people who think it offers them something other than dominance over their fellow man. Poor white people have been sold a bill of goods that offers them white supremacy and takes away jobs and economic growth.

Tom, I have never, not once, thought of you as white. I think of you as a father, a husband, a brilliant businessman, a feminist, a Quaker, and most of all as a friend. You have never treated me as whiteness demands that you treat me. I don't want to talk about race because if I do, I stop being an artist, an educator, a godfather, a gay man, and most of all, human.

So I appreciate the offer, Tom, I really do. I just don't think I can write about it. I can write about art if you like. I know a lot about that.

Love to Elena and the kids, and to you, my man.

Steve

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See: **Towards a Moral Conception of Allyship**

By Zachary Kincaid Tuggle, University of Tennessee

https://trace.tennessee.edu/utk_gradthes/5166/

Racism: The Code Switch

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=SmHoxJA4n1I&t=5s>

5 minutes

Diverse City LLC

Code-switching is how individuals adjust ALL forms of communication and expression based on their audience. There are many reasons people of color code-switch especially in the workplace. Throughout history, code-switching has served as deference against linguistic discrimination- a form of racial bias. There are many diverse ways of speaking, outside of the norm, that need to be accepted in society.

Dr. CI shares her insight on this topic and how to approach this bias. Share your experiences with code-switching and how it affected you!

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Get Dr. CI's new book, *Soulful Words: The Testimonies of Black Students to the Manifestation of Discrimination in Higher Education*

Amazon: <https://www.amazon.com/-/es/Dr-Cheryl...>

Barnes and Noble: <https://www.barnesandnoble.com/w/soul...>

Objectification: Don't Touch My Hair!

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=MbzAGSxtge0&t=2s>

4 minutes

Diverse City LLC

This video will show an interaction between colleagues in the workplace that represents objectification. One colleague touches another's hair without consent. This issue is widely understood, especially in the Black community, as problematic and crossing personal space boundaries. This highlights how much one person may have to endure at work on a regular basis and how it impacts the feeling of safety in the workplace. Dr. CI shares ways to approach the conversation if and when somebody attempts to violate your person space at work.

Want more videos like this? Give this video a thumbs up, hit the subscribe button and leave us a comment below.

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White Privilege

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=R4QGeANghj4&t=72s>

9 minutes

Diverse City LLC

TAKE A COUPLE OF Minutes of your time today to WATCH THIS EPISODE featuring our very own Judy Blair discussing WHITE PRIVILEGE. Listen to Judy describe the 4 types of White Privilege and how they impact other people.

Resources:

White Privilege: Unpacking the Invisible Knapsack by Peggy McIntosh

Explaining White Privilege To A Broke White Person by Gina Crosley-Corcoran

McIntosh, P. (1988). White privilege and male privilege: A personal account of coming to see correspondences through work in Women's Studies. Paper#189, retrieved from <http://web.clas.ufl.edu/users/leslieh...>

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White Privilege and Allyship: <https://www.huffingtonpost.com/jordan...>

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What if white people led the charge to end racism? | Dwinita Mosby Tyler | TEDxMileHigh

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=VQSW5SFBsOg>

11 minutes

Diversity fatigue is real: people of color are tired of leading the fight. White allies are tired of being told they're doing it wrong. No wonder we don't have equity yet! In this inspiring talk, Dwinita Mosby-Tyler explains why we need "unlikely allies" in the fight for justice, and why people who are experiencing inequality first hand must be willing to accept the help. Dr. Dwinita Mosby Tyler is the Chief Catalyst and Founder of The Equity Project, a company that supports organizations & communities in building equity, inclusion, and diversity, and The HR Shop, a boutique human resources firm for non-profits & small businesses. Previously, she was the Senior Vice President and Chief Inclusion Officer for Children's Hospital Colorado and the Executive Director of the Office of Human Resources for the City & County of Denver. She has three children, Jasmine, Imani, and Chinelo, and is married to Rev. Dr. Timothy Tyler. This talk was given at a TEDx event using the TED conference format but independently organized by a local community. Learn more at <https://www.ted.com/tedx>

The power of privilege: Tiffany Jana at TEDxRVAWomen

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=N0acvkHliZs>

15 minutes

Tiffany has directed organizational development, marketing, and community outreach initiatives for over 10 years. She founded TMI Consulting, the world's first Diversity and Inclusion Certified Benefit Corporation. TMI Consulting recently designed and facilitated a very successful series of transatlantic cooperative civic-engagement workshops in the US and the EU for the German Marshall Fund as well as a Congressional Leadership series of bipartisan dialogues on race and democracy. Tiffany's leadership in community building work has been recognized twice in the Wall Street Journal. She was named one of Richmond's 2013 "Top 40 Under 40" by Style Weekly. Tiffany has a bachelor's in Business Management and Marketing, an MBA in Global Management, and is currently a candidate for a Doctor of Management in Organizational Leadership.

In the spirit of ideas worth spreading, TEDx is a program of local, self-organized events that bring people together to share a TED-like experience. At a TEDx event, TEDTalks video and live speakers combine to spark deep discussion and connection in a small group. These local, self-organized events are branded TEDx, where x = independently organized TED event. The TED Conference provides general guidance for the TEDx program, but individual TEDx events are self-organized.* (*Subject to certain rules and regulations)

Allyship

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=K3YGB0AWQ1A&t=6s>

5 minutes

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Listen to Dr. CI, discuss 6 steps to becoming an effective ally. Resources: Guide to Allyship: <http://www.guidetoallyship.com/> Allyship 101 (PDF): <https://www.glsen.org/sites/default/f...> Anti-Oppression Network: <https://theantioppressionnetwork.com/...> Article: Social Justice Ally Identity Development: <http://www.mauracullen.com/wp-content...> Want more videos like this? Be sure to subscribe to our channel and leave us a like and comment below. Diverse City LLC is a Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Consulting Agency based in Los Angeles & Seattle. We provide a solutions oriented approach to helping companies assess, and solve issues of growth and development in the areas of diversity, equity, and inclusion (DEI). To learn more, visit us online at <https://diversecityllc.com> Shop Diverse City merchandise at <https://shop-diverse-city.myshopify.com> Join in the conversation with us: Instagram & Twitter: @DiverseCityLLC & @Dr.ciofficial Facebook: <https://facebook.com/DiverseCityLLC>

Racism: A Table Talk about Getting In Formation

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=9hbNeZk8G9I>

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A conversation about racism with Diverse City's very own CEO/Founder Cheryl Ingram and Senior Consultants ChrisTiana ObeySumner & Judy Blair, facilitated by LaTasha Conway. Diverse City LLC is a Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Consulting Agency based in Los Angeles & Seattle. We provide a solutions oriented approach to helping companies assess, and solve issues of growth and development in the areas of diversity, equity, and inclusion (DEI). To learn more, visit us online at <https://diversecityllc.com> Shop Diverse City Merch at <https://shop-diverse-city.myshopify.com> Join in the conversation with us: Instagram & Twitter: @DiverseCityLLC & @Dr.ciofficial Facebook: <https://facebook.com/DiverseCityLLC> Join our Newsletter <https://mailchi.mp/d597a041d7d5/dc-ne...> Get Dr. CI's new book, Soulful Words: The Testimonies of Black Students to the Manifestation of Discrimination in Higher Education Amazon: <https://www.amazon.com/-/es/Dr-Cheryl...> Barnes and Noble: <https://www.barnesandnoble.com/w/soul...>

Talking about Race, Learning about Racism: Racial Identity Development Theory in the Classroom

By BEVERLY DANIEL TATUM Mount Holyoke College

<https://equity.ucla.edu/wp-content/uploads/2017/01/Tatum-Talking-About-Race.pdf>

The inclusion of race-related content in college courses often generates emotional responses in students that range from guilt and shame to anger and despair. The discomfort associated with these emotions can lead students to resist the learning process. Based on her experience teaching a course on the psychology of racism and an application of racial identity development theory, Beverly Daniel Tatum identifies three major sources of student resistance to talking about race and learning about racism, as well as some strategies for overcoming this resistance.

As many educational institutions struggle to become more multicultural in terms of their students, faculty, and staff, they also begin to examine issues of cultural representation within their curriculum. This examination has evoked a growing number of courses that give specific consideration to the effect of variables such as race, class, and gender on human experience — an important trend that is reflected and supported by the increasing availability of resource manuals for the modification of course content (Bronstein & Quina, 1988; Hull, Scott, & Smith, 1982; Schuster & Van Dyne, 1985).

Unfortunately, less attention has been given to the issues of process that inevitably emerge in the classroom when attention is focused on race, class, and/or gender. It is very difficult to talk about these concepts in a meaningful way without also talking and learning about racism, classism, and sexism.¹ The introduction of these issues of oppression often generates powerful emotional responses in students that range from guilt and shame to anger and despair. If not addressed, these emotional responses can result in student resistance to oppression-related content areas. Such resistance can ultimately interfere with the cognitive understanding and mastery of the material. This resistance and potential interference is particularly common when specifically addressing issues of race and racism.

Yet, when students are given the opportunity to explore race-related material in a classroom where both their affective and intellectual responses are acknowledged and addressed, their level of understanding is greatly enhanced.

This article seeks to provide a framework for understanding students' psychological responses to race-related content and the student resistance that can result, as well as some strategies for overcoming this resistance. It is informed by more than a decade of experience as an African-American woman engaged in teaching an undergraduate course on the psychology of racism, by thematic analyses of student journals and essays written for the racism class, and by an understanding and application of racial identity development theory (Helms, 1990).

As a clinical psychologist with a research interest in racial identity development among African-American youth raised in predominantly White communities, I began teaching about racism quite fortuitously. In 1980, while I was a part-time lecturer in the Black Studies department of a large public university, I was invited to teach a course called Group Exploration of Racism (Black Studies 2). A requirement for Black Studies majors, the course had to be offered, yet the instructor who regularly taught the course was no longer affiliated with the institution. Armed with a folder full of handouts, old syllabi that the previous instructor left behind, a copy of *White Awareness: Handbook for Anti-racism Training* (Katz, 1978), and my own clinical skills as a group facilitator, I constructed a course that seemed to meet the goals already outlined in the course catalogue. Designed "to provide students with an understanding of the psychological causes and emotional reality of racism as it appears in everyday life," the course incorporated the use of lectures, readings, simulation exercises, group research projects, and extensive class discussion to help students explore the psychological impact of racism on both the oppressor and the oppressed.

Though my first efforts were tentative, the results were powerful. The students in my class, most of whom were White, repeatedly described the course in their evaluations as one of the most valuable educational experiences of their college careers. I was convinced that helping students understand the ways in which racism operates in their own lives, and what they could do about it, was a social responsibility that I should accept. The freedom to institute the course in the curriculum of the psychology departments in which I would eventually teach became a personal condition of employment. I have successfully introduced the course in each new educational setting I have been in since leaving that university.

Tokenism and 5 Ways to Avoid It in Your DEI Efforts

November 10, 2021

<https://www.bryq.com/blog/5-ways-to-avoid-tokenism-in-your-dei-efforts/>

We all know that diversity is great for our organizations. Having a diverse team leads to higher levels of innovation, more productivity, and happier employees. It's a ripple effect that ultimately leads to higher employee retention and bigger profit margins. It's a win-win for everybody involved! But is there a *wrong* way to go about diversifying your hiring efforts? If you aren't careful, your DEI efforts may be doing more harm than good. You could even be enabling tokenism.

In this blog we define tokenism, review the differences between diversity and inclusion, explain why tokenism is so dangerous, and give you five ways to avoid tokenism at your workplace.

Defining DEI Diversity Equity Inclusion

Before we continue learning about the dangers of tokenism, we must answer these questions: What exactly *is* diversity? And how does diversity differ from equity and inclusion?

Diversity is having employees from various different backgrounds working for an organization. We often associate diversity with visible differences such as race, gender, or age. While this is true, diversity also encompasses invisible qualities like sexual orientation, religion, or mental disability.

Equity is giving employees fair opportunity for success in their roles based on their individual needs. Not to be confused with equality, equity isn't about equal opportunity and access to the same resources. Equity acknowledges that not every employee has the same privileges, and helps them to access opportunities by providing additional resources if needed.

Inclusion is having a work environment that makes people feel respected, valued, heard, supported, and accepted. Inclusive environments are safe spaces for any employee to be their authentic selves no matter who they are.

DEI Expert Vernã Myers [gives us a great analogy that breaks it down perfectly](#).

Diversity is inviting everybody to the party, no matter who they are.

Equity is making sure that everybody has the ability and resources to get to the party and get inside.

Inclusion is being asked to dance or offered refreshments. There are few people who don't know what it's like to stand in the corner at a party, watching everybody else have fun.

The people having the party control inclusivity.



What is Tokenism?

You might think that your diversity efforts are enough. You've hit your diversity quota and you've ticked the "diversity" box. You're done, right? Not quite. Simply hiring an employee from an underrepresented group doesn't equate to diversity.

By definition, tokenism is a symbolic effort to hire a small number of people from underrepresented groups to appear as if there is equality within a workplace. There is a huge difference between being diverse in your hiring efforts and *seeming* diverse in your hiring efforts. Appearing diverse to prevent criticism leads to tokenism and frustrated employees feeling like they were only hired to check a diversity box.

The Dangers of Tokenism

Tokenism has absolutely devastating effects on employees from underrepresented groups. It causes minority employees to doubt their talents, leading them to develop serious imposter syndrome. They may begin to believe that they aren't actually great, and that they were only hired because they were a diverse candidate. Token employees also have higher visibility, considering they are often the "only" person like them in a room. This hinders them from being their true, authentic selves out of fear of how their actions or words will be perceived by others. This leads to great levels of performance pressure. Token employees might also be fearful that they might reinforce negative stereotypes associated with the underrepresented group in which they belong due to high visibility, causing high anxiety.

Additionally, token employees have to worry about their health and safety more so than other employees. These employees face higher levels of depression and stress. They are also more dissatisfied and less committed to their work compared to other employees. When it comes to token women and racial minorities, they are more likely to experience sexual harassment or discrimination when compared to the same underrepresented groups in more balanced working environments.

The list of dangers doesn't stop there. Tokenism doesn't just affect token employees – it affects the entire company. If employees feel that they are token hires who are there to tick a "diversity"

box, they will not stay with a company for long. Tokenism is terrible for employee retention. You'll also have the problem of your employees not trusting you. Do you think lack of trust only comes from token employees? Think again. If other employees are seeing tokenism happening within their organizations, it may be difficult for them to sit back and watch it happen. Tokenism can destroy your culture.

5 Ways to Avoid Tokenism



1. Diversity is More Than Just a Quota

Remember that diversity is **not** a box to tick. Diversity efforts are important, but don't focus too much on the statistics. Instead of focusing on hiring specific people from underrepresented groups, why don't you start by asking yourself how you can make your hiring process more **inclusive** from the start? Create job descriptions that appeal to diverse candidates. Implement anti-bias hiring tools like talent assessments. Stop looking at resumes that breed bias. If you start making your hiring efforts more inclusive from the get-go, diversity is sure to follow. Make sure you are including the EI in DEI.

2. Allow Diverse Employees to Be Decision-Makers

There is clear underrepresentation of minorities in leadership positions within companies. This means that they usually aren't present when decisions are being made. Providing diverse employees a seat at the table is crucial. Allow them to not only be in the room when decisions are being made, but let them be a part of making those decisions. By including them in the conversation, you'll avoid tokenism and ensure that your diversity efforts matter.

3. Don't Force Employees to be Spokespeople for Their Communities

Token employees are often made spokespeople for the underrepresented groups they belong to. It's important to recognize that diverse employees are first and foremost individuals. While we can and should encourage employees to voice their opinions and beliefs on certain subjects, the lived experience of that one employee will **not** be reflective of that group as a whole. Be sure to listen carefully to any feedback or insight this employee has, and avoid expressing any positive or negative stereotypes attached to an employee's minority group. Also be certain that an employee even *wants* to be a spokesperson and feels comfortable doing so.

4. Diversity is an 'All Hands On Deck' Effort

Sure, it's great to create a team dedicated to diversity and inclusion efforts. Realizing there is a problem that needs to be fixed is Step #1! However, *everybody* needs to be on board – especially

leadership. What is the point of launching a DEI initiative if upper management isn't going to sign off on it or be a part of it? When creating a diversity task force, be sure to have a balanced panel of diverse employees and ensure that this team includes company leaders who will take the project seriously and see to it that it's successful.

5. Don't Fake Your Diversity

One of the worst things you can do is display imagery of diverse teams on your website and social media platforms when the actual make-up of your team doesn't reflect that. It's OK to acknowledge that your team isn't diverse, but that you're working on it. Transparency about your DEI efforts goes a long way. If you market your workplace as being diverse when it's not, you are contributing towards tokenism and setting yourself up for backlash by making diverse employees feel lied to during the onboarding process.

Overnight I Became A Threat To White Men And Women In The Workplace

I moved from invisible to highly visible in a heartbeat, it was hard



[Rebecca Stevens A.](#)

Sep 3

<https://medium.com/illumination-curated/overnight-i-became-a-threat-to-white-men-and-women-in-the-workplace-f3988f8c8d24>

4 min read

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Member-only

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Photo by [Mikelya Fournier](#) on [Unsplash](#)

I'm a Black woman. For most of my professional career, I have worked twice as hard as my white colleagues to get the compensation and recognition I deserve. Over time, I have seen less qualified colleagues progress to leadership roles while I have been told to wait my turn. Small hint here: after a while, you realize that it will never be your turn and you accept that fact just to keep your sanity.

I had accepted it and at 49 years old realized that I would now have to contend with ageism too. In short, my career was over. At least that was until George Floyd's murder. My life changed dramatically upon his death. As a Black woman, I suddenly became "hot stuff". Headhunters and recruiters were reaching out to me in large numbers because they had been instructed to diversify their pool of candidates. Some didn't even really want to hire me, but they figured that adding my name and mainly my Black face to their candidates' pool would give them kudos. It was a surprising time, because for once, as a Black woman, I was in high demand. It was a good feeling.

I was so busy focusing on the upside of this situation rather than what it would concretely mean for my relationships with white colleagues in the workplace. Or maybe, what I should really admit is that I expected them to understand that it was my turn to shine. They had had their turn several times over and would still continue to benefit from opportunities regardless. I didn't realize how far I was from the truth.

The minute the global racial reckoning happened and companies started announcing that they would do more to diversify their ranks, s*** hit the fan for me. Colleagues that I had considered friends became saboteurs. They talked behind my back, ganged up against me, withdrew resources, and undermined me. I felt myself endangered on several fronts and realized that I couldn't trust

anyone anymore. It was a very difficult time — knowing that there was no one I could confide in or depend on.

When you realize that we spend close to 30 percent of our day at work, you can see how stressful it would be to feel insecure for such a large part of your day. Colleagues did not even hide why they had so much animosity toward me. They'd frequently admit that Black Lives Matter and the woke movement were forcing the company to hire more Black people, people that they didn't even necessarily feel were right for the job. One colleague even said that along with being a Black woman, if I was also a lesbian and disabled I'd be able to get any job I wanted. The vitriol, and cynicism was untenable and reason enough to push one to the edge. But I persevered, hashtag: #mouthstofeed.

I realized however that sitting there and hoping the situation would resolve itself eventually wasn't going to work. The animosity just kept on growing and leadership was either oblivious or didn't want to engage in what could potentially become a contentious situation. All the meanwhile however, Black people were quitting, quiet quitting or getting frustrated or burned out by the status quo.

The reality is that what needs to happen is dialogue. Change is challenging for most people, but this type of change, the one that I talk about above, is seen to threaten the very livelihood of white people. They will not take it sitting down, they will fight, and this means using all the tools in the arsenal to destroy the opponent. It might sound cruel, but it's the truth.

Companies cannot just take a back seat to all of this. They have to be proactive in helping Black people make their way in these organizations. They need to communicate better on why diversity is important for the sustainability of companies. They need to educate their employees to understand that their

livelihoods are directly linked to the diverse environment that the company is trying to instill. Anyone who doesn't see the value of this shouldn't even be in the company, that's the long and short of it.

Companies have been getting away with half-a***** diversity, equity and inclusion efforts for a while now. Generation Z see right through this and if these same companies want redemption, they are going to have to do things properly. Hiring a Black person and not investing in their integration into your company is never a good idea. After a while your reputation will suffer because people will ask: "Why don't Black people stay in that company?" The assumption that follows this statement is "That company must be too racist". And from there, you lose access to Black talent.

At the end of the day though, toxic work environments lower productivity levels. Any company that wants to be as profitable as it can be must systematically and consistently look out for the welfare of all their employees because a "happy" employee positively impacts the bottom-line.

Thank you for reading my perspective.

Social exclusion (or Marginalisation)

See the earlier article: Marriage Equality Disabled people deserve to be able to marry without being ruined financially.

From Wikipedia, the free encyclopedia

https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Social_exclusion

Social exclusion or **social marginalisation** is the social disadvantage and relegation to the fringe of [society](#). It is a term that has been used widely in [Europe](#) and was first used in [France](#) in the late 20th century.^[1] It is used across disciplines including [education](#), [sociology](#), [psychology](#), [politics](#) and [economics](#).^[2]

Social exclusion is the process in which individuals are blocked from (or denied full access to) various [rights](#), opportunities and resources that are normally available to members of a different group, and which are fundamental to social integration and observance of human rights within that particular group^[3] (e.g., housing, employment, healthcare, civic engagement, democratic participation, and [due process](#)).

[Alienation](#) or [disenfranchisement](#) resulting from social exclusion can be connected to a person's [social class](#), race, skin color, religious affiliation, ethnic origin, [educational status](#), childhood relationships,^[4] [living standards](#), and or political opinions, and appearance. Such exclusionary forms of [discrimination](#) may also apply to [disabled people](#), [minorities](#), [LGBTQ+](#) people, [drug users](#),^[5] institutional care leavers,^[6] [the elderly](#) and the [young](#). Anyone who appears to deviate in any way from [perceived norms](#) of a population may thereby become subject to coarse or subtle forms of social exclusion.

The outcome of social exclusion is that affected individuals or communities are prevented from participating fully in the economic, social, and political life of the society in which they live.^[7] This may result in resistance in the form of demonstrations, protests or lobbying from the excluded people.^[8]

The concept of social exclusion has led to the researcher's conclusion that in many European countries the impact of social disadvantages, that influence the well-being of all people, including with special needs, has an increasingly negative impact.^[9]

Most of the characteristics listed in this article are present together in studies of social exclusion, due to exclusion's multidimensionality.

Another way of articulating the definition of social exclusion is as follows:

Social exclusion is a multidimensional process of progressive social rupture, detaching groups and individuals from social relations and institutions and preventing them from full participation in the normal, normatively prescribed activities of the society in which they live.^[10]

In an alternative conceptualization, social exclusion theoretically emerges at the individual or group level on four correlated dimensions:

insufficient access to [social rights](#),
material deprivation,
limited [social participation](#) and
a lack of normative integration.

Defining marginalised; UK AID's Leave no one behind agenda

<https://www.ukaiddirect.org/wp-content/uploads/2017/03/Defining-marginalised.pdf>

COMMENT: UK AID show by their language that they intend to carefully quantitatively measure marginalisation quantitatively and then provide appropriate levels of support that are justified. Although the word intersectional isn't mentioned, to measure quantitatively implies that intersectional issues have been taken into account.

UK Aid, funded by **the Foreign, Commonwealth & Development Office (FCDO) of the United Kingdom**, is a challenge fund designed to support the UK's commitment to reducing poverty and achieving the Global Goals.

Introduction

In signing up to the Global Goals, DFID is committed to 'leaving no one behind'. The interests of the poorest and most vulnerable populations **must be prioritised**; this includes the world's most disadvantaged people; the poorest of the poor, and those people who are **most excluded and at risk of violence and discrimination**.

DFID pledge to ensure that:

- every person has a fair opportunity in life no matter who or where they are
- people who are **furthest behind**, who have least opportunity and who are the most excluded **will be prioritised**
- every person counts and will be counted

The findings in the recent evaluation conducted by Coffey on UK Aid Direct and its predecessor the Global Poverty Action Fund, show that many of the programmes supported to date have not been successful in reaching the most marginalised.

Evidence from project annual reviews and project completion reports often point to difficulties faced by implementing partners in defining marginalised:

- what is meant by marginalised and how do we identify those communities, households or individuals who are marginalised?

Marginalisation describes both a process, and a condition, that prevents individuals or groups from full participation in social, economic and political life

As a condition, it can prevent individuals from actively participating.

There is a multidimensional aspect, with social, economic and political barriers all contributing to the marginalisation of an individual or group of individuals.

People can be marginalised due to multiple factors; sexual orientation, gender, geography, ethnicity, religion, displacement, conflict or disability.

Poverty is both a consequence and a cause of being marginalised.

However, policy makers do not consider that all forms of marginalised or poorest populations have equal weighting, that there are different levels of poverty and marginalisation within each context.

There are core factors that determine who or what groups are marginalised and what the barriers are that prevent them from being reached.

Political discrimination may marginalise some ethnic groups, migrants or particular regions of the country.

Social discrimination and marginalisation can impact on a wide range of groups on the basis of age, gender, sexuality, language, disability etc.

Economic marginalisation can prevent equal access to basic services, income opportunities and access to jobs.

It is then regarded as the combined result of personal risk factors (age, gender, race); macro-societal changes (demographic, economic and labor market developments, technological innovation, the evolution of social norms); government legislation and social policy; and the actual behavior of businesses, administrative organisations and fellow citizens.^[11]

When defining target groups for interventions:

- consider the core factors determining marginalisation in your specific context
- consider the political, social and economic factors
- define the barriers preventing the marginalised group from being reached
- consider how different types of marginalisation intersect to multiply disadvantage.

For example, in some countries girls may not be particularly marginalised overall but certain groups like the rural poor are marginalised. Gather the evidence needed to weight your marginalised groups to determine which groups are the most vulnerable.

Evidence should be drawn from existing data that can point to a specific need, rather than anecdotal evidence. Within those populations, it is possible to further define the levels of marginalisation, for example; firstly use national or district data to identify the first layer of vulnerable populations, then draw on baseline data or existing surveys that have taken place within your proposed intervention populations to demonstrate further marginalisation within the vulnerable population(s).

It is important to collect and use data disaggregated by sex, then depending on the project, by age, wealth, location, ethnicity, disability, sexuality etc.

The most marginalised can be 'invisible' to conventional forms of data collection, for example, they are not in traditional households, or may be overlooked or deliberately hidden by households responding to surveys and may then get missed from household surveys. You may need to use innovative data collection methods.

Often community mapping is used, working closely with the community using community health workers for example, to identify those falling under the radar.

It will be easier to reach some, and more difficult to reach others. This will depend on the barriers and the context, and will therefore mean interventions will need to be tailored specifically to match each context.

An example from the education sector:

- Rural girls are disadvantaged compared to boys in completion of secondary education in Pakistan, but in urban areas, it's the boys who fall behind. Interventions in rural areas therefore need to consider how to address the issue of getting more girls to complete secondary education, whilst in urban areas, interventions need to look at how to support boys to perform better.

Policy paper

Updated 6 March 2019

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/leaving-no-one-behind-our-promise/leaving-no-one-behind-our-promise>

We commit to putting the last first.

The Global Goals for Sustainable Development offer a historic opportunity to eradicate extreme poverty and ensure no one is left behind. To realise this opportunity we will prioritise the interests of the world's most vulnerable and disadvantaged people; the poorest of the poor and those people who are most excluded and at risk of violence and discrimination.

We believe that no one should face the indignity of extreme, absolute, chronic poverty, no one should be denied the opportunity to realise their full potential or to share in progress, no-one should be unfairly burdened by disaster or a changing climate, and no-one should have their interests systematically overlooked. We believe it is in all of our interest to leave no one behind and to ensure a fair opportunity for all, now and for the future.

We pledge to ensure that:

every person has a fair opportunity in life no matter who or where they are
people who are furthest behind, who have least opportunity and who are the most excluded will be prioritised
every person counts and will be counted

As governments, citizens, civil society and businesses, we commit to work together to eradicate extreme poverty and leave no one behind by:

listening and responding to the voices of those left furthest behind, such as people with disabilities, children, older people and those who face discrimination based on who they are or where they live. Every country, regardless of their

stage of development, has a responsibility to empower and address the needs of its most vulnerable citizens

holding ourselves and each other accountable for designing policies and building inclusive institutions that put the furthest behind first and sustainably address the root causes of poverty and exclusion

taking steps to enable all people to reach their full potential, including by securing good nutrition, protection from disease, access to quality education, access to clean water and sanitation, and freedom to have a say in the decisions that affect their lives

challenging the social barriers that deny people opportunity and limit their potential, including changing discrimination and exclusion based on gender, age, location, caste, religion, [disability](#) or sexual identity

building inclusive and open economies and societies, where there is rule of law, inclusive political systems, action to address corruption [except for our own corruption] and where all people are able to hold their governments to account [except us].

working with young people to help break the cycle of discrimination, exclusion and poverty

achieving gender equality, prioritise the empowerment of girls and women and end violence against girls and women, and stop modern slavery

supporting a data revolution, to ensure timely, accurate and high quality data is used to achieve and measure sustainable development and to monitor progress and assess whether targets are being met by all peoples and all segments of society

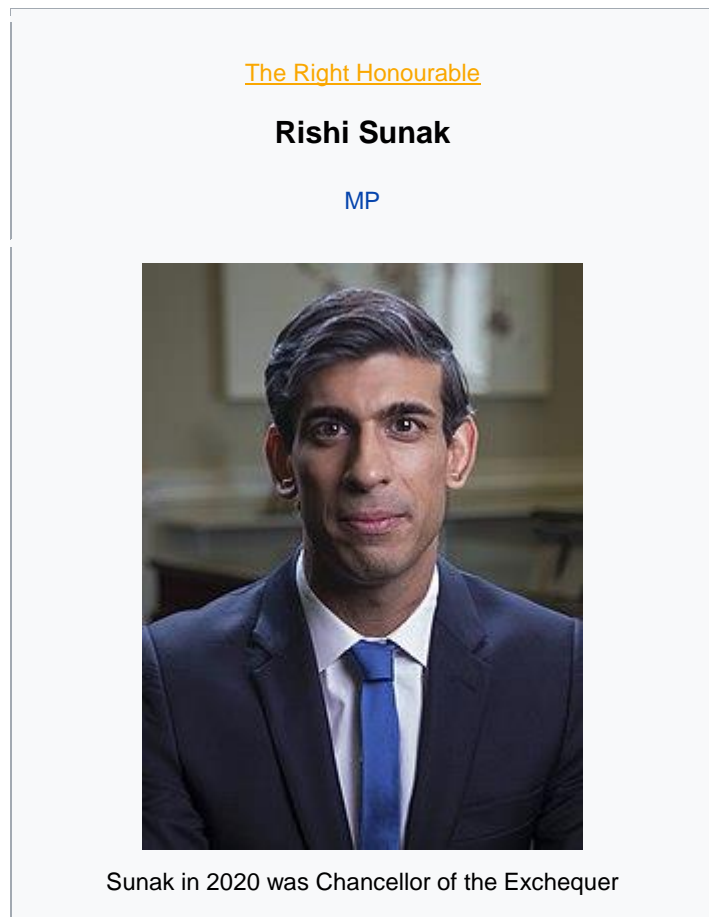
Signed: Boris (don't laugh) Johnson

>Report a problem with this page< Except that you don't think we will actually do it!!!!

If you are worried that you might die laughing, please call emergency and get rotten drunk while you wait – you will never get through, because we have cut off the funding !!!!

Rishi Sunak (“Legal” tax avoidance ?) by UK Chancellor of Exchequer at the time

From Wikipedia, the free encyclopedia



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Register of ministers' interests

In November 2020, Sunak was reported by [*The Guardian*](#) to have not declared a significant amount of his wife and family's financial interests on the register of ministers' interests, including a combined £1.7 billion shareholding in the Indian company [*Infosys*](#).^[97] Sunak is required under the ministerial code to declare interests that are "relevant" to his responsibilities and "which might be thought to give rise to a conflict" with his public duties.^[97] The independent adviser on ministers' interests investigated and concluded that Sunak had not broken any rules.^{[98][99]}

Akshata Murty may have avoided up to £20m in tax with non-dom status

This article is more than 5 months old

Pressure grows on chancellor over tax affairs of wife, who pays £30,000 a year to be classed as non-domiciled



Chancellor Rishi Sunak with Akshata Murty. Her spokesperson says she abides by all necessary rules. Photograph: Ian West/PA

[Peter Walker](#), [Kalyeena Makortoff](#), [Graeme Wearden](#), [Jessica Elgot](#) and [Rupert Neate](#)

Thu 7 Apr 2022 20.09 BST

<https://www.theguardian.com/politics/2022/apr/07/rishi-sunaks-wife-says-its-not-relevant-to-say-where-she-pays-tax-overseas>

Rishi Sunak's wife has potentially avoided up to £20m in UK tax by being non-domiciled and pays £30,000 a year to keep the status – revelations that come amid growing political pressure on the chancellor.

Akshata Murty gets about £11.5m a year in dividends from a stake in an Indian IT firm and declares non-dom status, which allows people to avoid tax on foreign earnings, it emerged on Wednesday.

On Thursday her spokesperson said all necessary tax was paid by Murty but declined to say where, as that information was not “relevant”. They conceded it was possible for someone in the multimillionaire's position to take advantage of tax havens on income earned outside the UK.

Keir Starmer, the Labour leader, said it would be “breathtaking hypocrisy” if Murty had been reducing her liabilities while the [chancellor was raising taxes on others](#) amid a cost of living crisis.

The row risks further damaging Sunak's carefully honed brand among voters and Conservative MPs, already [hit by last month's spring statement](#), with a former minister warning the timing was especially bad coming days after the national insurance rise came into force.

Murty has collected about 5.4bn Indian rupees (£54.5m) in dividends from Infosys, the Indian-headquartered IT business founded by her father, over the past seven and a half years, the period for which there is public data. Non-dom status for that whole period could have saved her about £20m in UK taxes.

Last year she collected dividends of £11.6m. As a higher rate UK taxpayer she would have been expected to pay 38.1% tax on the payout, which works out at £4.4m. Before 2016, the rate was 30.6%. It rose to 39.35% this week.

One factor which could reduce the total Murty would have been eligible to pay would be any reduction under double tax treaties between the UK and India, tax experts said.

Murty's spokesperson said they had no comment on the £20m figure beyond reiterating she paid relevant taxes on UK and overseas incomes. They accepted that people with such tax arrangements could theoretically minimise payments using tax havens, while saying they had no comment as to whether Murty did this.

Murty has previously [collected other dividend income via the tax haven of Mauritius](#), which does not tax dividends. The spokesperson also declined to elaborate on the initial explanation for Murty's non-dom tax status – the fact she has Indian citizenship – when this would still mean such a tax arrangement was a choice.

Labour wrote to Sunak with a series of questions on his wife's tax position. James Murray, the shadow financial secretary to the Treasury, wrote that it was “in the vital public interest” that he provide clarity on issues including whether he had benefited from his wife's status, how long she had claimed it and how much she had saved.

“As chancellor it is crucial you both follow the rules and lead by example,” Murray said. “Any impression that there is one set of rules favouring a few, and another for everyone else, threatens the integrity of tax policy in our country.”

Of course Rishi Sunak's wife is a non-dom. For the Tories, hyper-wealth is normal
Polly Toynbee



[Read more](#)

The Liberal Democrats said the case showed a law which bars MPs and peers from having non-dom status should be extended to spouses to avoid any risk of conflicts of interest.

There was also concern from some Conservative MPs. A former minister said: “The perception is [an attitude of] ‘what is the problem?’ Here is someone worth £3bn who has a different tax arrangement. I’m sure everything is above board but that’s not the point.”

Another Tory MP, a Boris Johnson loyalist, said it would be hard for MPs to stomach given Sunak had put up taxes. “There’s this guy, as rich as Croesus, putting up taxes when people are worrying about the next gas bill.”

On Thursday evening Sunak rejected accusations of hypocrisy or tax avoidance, telling the Sun that every penny owed by Murty in the UK is paid. “To smear my wife to get at me is awful,” he said. “She loves her country like I love mine.”

But Treasury sources strongly denied reports that Sunak believes Downing Street is behind the leaks about his wife's tax status. "It is categorically not true that Rishi or anyone else in his team believe this is coming from No 10," one told the Guardian.

While Murty's spokesperson characterised her tax status as a function of her Indian citizenship, tax experts said non-dom status is not automatic but a choice.

Prof Richard Murphy, a Sheffield University academic who co-founded the Tax Justice Network, said: "Domicile has nothing to do with a person's nationality. In other words, the claims made in the statement issued by Ms Murty are wrong."

Mike Warburton, formerly tax director at accountants Grant Thornton, said Murty was entitled to Indian tax domicile because of her father and because she was born there, saying it was "entirely legal and entirely appropriate" for her to do this.

He said: "I don't know, of course, but it may be that those shares are held in an offshore trust, possibly set up by her father. If I had been advising her, I would have suggested it to them. In my view this is all bog-standard planning for anyone who takes professional advice."

Speaking to Sky News, Starmer said the chancellor "has very, very serious questions to answer". The Labour leader said Sunak had repeatedly raised taxes.

"He says all of this is necessary, there's no option. If it now transpires that his wife has been using schemes to reduce her own tax, then I'm afraid that is breathtaking hypocrisy.

"We need complete transparency on this, so that we can all understand what schemes she may have been using to reduce her own tax."

Earlier the business secretary, [Kwasi Kwarteng](#), insisted the chancellor and his wife had been "incredibly transparent" about the arrangement.

Speaking to BBC Radio 4's Today programme, he said: "She's an Indian citizen. And so she, as you say, pays tax here on UK income, but pays tax abroad on foreign income."

But asked where she paid tax abroad – in India or elsewhere such as the Cayman Islands – Kwarteng said: "I don't know anything about her tax affairs."

Kwarteng added that Murty and Sunak had been "very transparent" about her status, and that Sunak had declared it when he became a minister.

"The Treasury, the department which he works in, knows about all those affairs," he said. "And there is a measure of transparency and he's been very honest about that. And I think, as far as I'm concerned, that's good enough for me. And I think we should move on from that story."

Earlier, Kwarteng had told Times Radio that non-domicile status had existed in the UK "for more than 200 years".

He said: “That’s something that’s been well established ... I think there’s a lot of malicious attacks on someone who, after all, is a private citizen and is not a politician.”

Of course Rishi Sunak’s wife is a non-dom. For the Tories, hyper-wealth is normal

This article is more than 5 months old

<https://www.theguardian.com/commentisfree/2022/apr/07/rishi-sunak-wife-non-dom-cost-of-living-crisis-britain>

Polly Toynbee



As the cost of living crisis starts to bite, Britain’s spectacle of injustice and profiteering may ignite public indignation



Rishi Sunak and his wife, Akshata Murty. ‘A massive £100,000 donation Sunak recently made to his old school, Winchester college, displays a similarly alarming insouciance about the state schools he starves of resources.’ Photograph: Vickie Flores/EPA

Thu 7 Apr 2022 17.12 BST

<https://www.theguardian.com/commentisfree/2022/apr/07/rishi-sunak-wife-non-dom-cost-of-living-crisis-britain>

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ho is shocked? “**Outrage over huge pay rises for Manchester Airports**

Group bosses” was a Guardian story on Wednesday, just as the airport seized up. Those eight-hour queues of passengers were partly caused by the company’s mass redundancies; **almost 900 jobs were lost** at the airport group during the pandemic. No wonder it now has trouble recruiting, after the remaining staff took a 10% pay cut to help the company through Covid. Yet in that same crisis moment, executives had grasped themselves huge pay rises of almost 25%. The chief executive was awarded a £500,000 rise, taking his total pay to £2.5m.

This is just one of the many stories from the boardroom troughs that have filled the business pages over the last decades, as fat cats have plundered the companies they manage while average wages have stood still. Here’s the question: is Britain so habituated to decades of kleptocracy that voters just cynically shrug this off, the way they do in Russia?

The lid blew off top pay in the 1980s, and since then many of these masters of the universe have been severely undertaxed, according to a **report on Wednesday from the**

IFS. A corrupted tax system allows those who register their income through their own companies to pay just 27% tax, by classing their earnings as “capital gains”: as employees, these high earners should be paying an average 42%, the IFS says. This deceit looks glaringly worse in a week where ordinary employees have been hit with the **national insurance levy**. Other types of incomes – whether capital gains, share dividends, professional law partnerships or landlords’ rents – don’t pay any NI contributions, and are taxed lower than earned income. Taxes on unearned wealth can fall to as low as 10% for the “business asset disposal relief” wheeze, or even zero when capital gains owed to the Treasury are mysteriously wiped out upon death.

The one sensible thing Margaret Thatcher’s chancellor Nigel Lawson did was to tax all income at the same level, whatever its source, removing any incentive to distort earnings by shunting them through elaborate self-employment and company structures. The shadow chancellor, Rachel Reeves, has proposed a similar policy. The government’s own creation, the **Office of Tax Simplification**, recommended aligning income tax and capital gains rates in 2020. So why did the Treasury shelve this measure?

The only reason can be to please the very rich. These aren’t just the party’s donors, but the Conservatives’ social and political milieu. They make hyper-wealth seem normal and all attacks on it a danger to “enterprise”. The IFS firmly slaps down that idea. Helen Miller, the deputy director of the IFS and a co-author of the report, writes that “**preferential rates on business income**” change how people take their income, “but are not well targeted at promoting entrepreneurship”.

Rishi Sunak is in trouble over disclosure that his wife – whose annual income is £11.5m – is a **non-dom quite legally paying no UK tax** on the money she earns abroad. This illuminates a stratosphere of wealth far beyond the imaginings of most taxpayers. If Sunak never heard the klaxon about what this might look like, it reveals just how little he understands the lives of most people he is now subjecting to the harshest **cost of living shock** in living memory, let alone the poorest people who are well below his radar.

A massive **£100,000 donation Sunak** recently made to his old school, Winchester college, displays a similarly alarming insouciance about the state schools he starves of resources, whose teachers earn **8% less** than a decade ago. Of course, a plutocrat could be chancellor – all MPs are in the **top 10%** of earners – but to be a credible politician, it takes 10 times the social sensitivity of this fiscally conservative belt-tightener. The governor of the Bank of England displayed this same social idiocy when he called on workers but not boardrooms to show “**restraint in pay bargaining, otherwise it will get out of control**” even as real pay is **falling yet faster** after a decade of pay stagnation.



Labour says Rishi Sunak must 'come clean' about wife's non-dom tax status

[Read more](#)

The top 1% tend to defend themselves and their tax privileges with an angry retort that they **pay 28%** of all the nation's total income tax and national insurance collected, so everyone else should be truly grateful to them and so should the Treasury. What's more, the share of total income tax and NI they contribute is rising: they were responsible for only **20% collected in 2003-4**. Well, of course it's rising, because their earnings flew ever higher above everyone else's since then, so they pay a bigger share. The gap between rich and poor has widened to the **largest in more than a decade**. The ONS said the income inequality gap as measured by the Gini coefficient had "steadily increased to 36.3%", which was "the highest level of income inequality since 2010".

Is Britain now shockproof, too used to these familiar tales of greed at the top to react? Many, myself included, thought that the **crash of 2008**, when bankers' risk-taking was bailed out by taxpayers, would mark the moment the public no longer tolerated unmerited, undertaxed rewards. But no.

Until now, pay stagnation has been a slow frog-boiler. But this time, as food and energy bills arrive like Exocets landing on ordinary households, forcing immediate family spending cuts, not just for those in poverty but for people who are more comfortably off, too, the spectacle of boardroom greed and pandemic profiteering may ignite public indignation. If so, Sunak will become an increasingly uncomfortable figurehead for the Tories.

Polly Toynbee is a Guardian columnist

Labour accuses Sunak family of avoiding tens of millions in taxes

This article is more than 5 months old

Chancellor obfuscated while imposing steep tax rises on ordinary Britons, says shadow minister

<https://www.theguardian.com/politics/2022/apr/09/rishi-sunak-akshata-murty-accused-avoiding-millions-taxes-labour>



Rishi Sunak and his wife, Akshata Murty. Labour says their actions raise ethical questions. Photograph: Vickie Flores/EPA

[Clea Skopeliti](#)

Rishi Sunak and his family potentially avoided paying tens of millions of pounds in taxes through his wife's "non-dom" status while the chancellor imposed tax rises on the public, Labour has said.

The chancellor's wife, [Akshata Murty](#), gave in to mounting pressure on Friday, announcing she would pay UK taxes as Sunak's position began to appear increasingly tenuous.

Murty said she understood that many felt her tax arrangements were not "compatible with [her] husband's job as chancellor", adding that she appreciated the "British sense of fairness". She will pay tax on all future worldwide income and for the last tax year, but not on backdated income.

Louise Haigh, the shadow transport secretary, accused Sunak of failing to be transparent about his family's financial arrangements while raising taxes for millions during a deepening cost of living crisis. Haigh said that while it was "clear" the arrangement was legal, many Britons would be questioning the ethics involved.

"The chancellor has not been transparent. He has come out on a number of occasions to try and muddy the waters around this and to obfuscate," she told BBC Radio 4's Today programme.

"It is clear that was legal. I think the question many people will be asking is whether it was ethical and whether it was right that the chancellor of the exchequer, whilst piling on 15 separate tax rises to the British public, was benefiting from a tax scheme that allowed his household to pay significantly less to the tune of potentially tens of millions of pounds less."

The Guardian estimates that Murty has potentially avoided about **£20m in tax** because of her status, for which she currently pays £30,000 a year.

Under non-dom rules, Murty did not legally have to pay tax in the UK on the estimated £11.5m in annual dividends she collects from her stake in Infosys, her billionaire father's IT business. UK tax residents would be expected to pay about £4.5m in tax on the dividend payment.

In a press conference on Friday, Boris Johnson admitted he had not been told about Murty's non-dom status. But he denied anyone at No 10 was briefing against the Sunaks, and praised the chancellor for doing an "outstanding job".

Haigh's remarks follow **calls from Labour and the Lib Dems** for an investigation into whether Sunak breached the ministerial code by failing to be transparent. Under pressure, the chancellor on Friday confirmed he had a US green card – meaning he had declared himself a "permanent US resident" for tax purposes for 19 months while he was chancellor and for six years as an MP.

A source confirmed Murty also held a green card. This admission appears to weaken Sunak's defence of his wife being a non-dom because she one day planned to return to live in India.

Furthermore, despite bowing to pressure to pay UK tax on future income and for the last tax year, Murty will retain her non-dom status. This could in future allow her family to legally avoid paying inheritance tax.

If the rest of Europe can protect the poorest from rising bills, why can't Britain?

Carsten Jung

[Read more](#)

Amid these calls for further scrutiny of the chancellor's tax arrangements and financial interests, Sunak was defended by Kevin Hollinrake, the Tory MP for Thirsk and Malton in North Yorkshire.

Hollinrake denied allegations of Murty's non-dom status being a "tax dodge", arguing that Conservative and Labour governments had both used non-dom status in policy to attract wealthy people to the UK.

Speaking on the Today programme, Hollinrake said: "This is not a tax dodge. It is a deliberate policy to attract wealthy people from other countries around the world to the UK on the basis that they create jobs and create wealth in the UK that benefits everybody."

The Guardian has learned that **just days before Sunak raised national insurance** contributions, affecting millions of people, the Treasury introduced a **new low-tax scheme** that is partly devised to benefit some wealthy non-dom investors.

Hollinrake went on to defend Sunak for continuing to hold a green card and for paying taxes in the US even after he became chancellor, saying that he needed one when he was working there.

He added that Sunak “then came to the UK and declared that position with the Cabinet Office”. “It doesn’t reduce his taxation in the UK at all. In fact with a green card you can often pay more tax,” he said.

Rishi Sunak's wife owns part of firm that funnelled money through Mauritius

This article is more than 1 year old



Akshata Murty, centre, wife of Rishi Sunak, left, is the daughter of one of India’s best-known entrepreneurs. Illustration: Guardian Design

Exclusive: Akshata Murty owns 5% of IMM, which used structure that could reduce taxes payable in India

Juliette Garside

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Mon 30 Nov 2020 06.00 GMT

<https://www.theguardian.com/world/2020/nov/30/rishi-sunak-wife-akshata-murty-imm-mauritius-india-tax>

The wife of the chancellor, **Rishi Sunak**, is a shareholder in a restaurants business that funnelled investments through a letterbox company in the tax haven of Mauritius, in a structure that could allow its backers to avoid taxes in India.

The business, **International Market Management** (IMM), is hoping to build a chain of dozens of restaurants across India, via franchise agreements with the celebrity chef Jamie Oliver and the American fast food brand Wendy's.



Huge wealth of Rishi Sunak's family not declared in ministerial register

[Read more](#)

The involvement of Sunak's wife, Akshata Murty, has emerged from an **investigation by the Guardian** into a range of financial assets held by Sunak and his close family, many of which have not been declared in the official register of ministers' interests.

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Murty invested in **IMM**, which was set up in 2014, alongside some of the best-known names in UK hedge fund circles. Before entering parliament, Sunak worked in hedge funds, eventually co-founding the US arm of the Cayman Islands registered Thélème Partners.

IMM is chaired by David Stewart, who was previously chief executive of the fund headed by Crispin Odey, a leading backer of a no-deal Brexit.

Stewart raised financing for the venture from a group of wealthy friends and acquaintances, with Odey Asset Management taking 20% of the shares and Hugh

Sloane, a founder of the Sloane Robinson fund, taking a 30% share. Murty, the daughter of one of India's best-known entrepreneurs, spent £500,000 on a 5% share, according to documents seen by the Guardian.

Each of the investors holds shares in IMM, which is a UK-registered company. Instead of investing directly in the two Indian subsidiaries that operate the restaurants, IMM funnelled the money raised from its shareholders through an intermediary company in **Mauritius**.

How investors routed funds via Mauritius

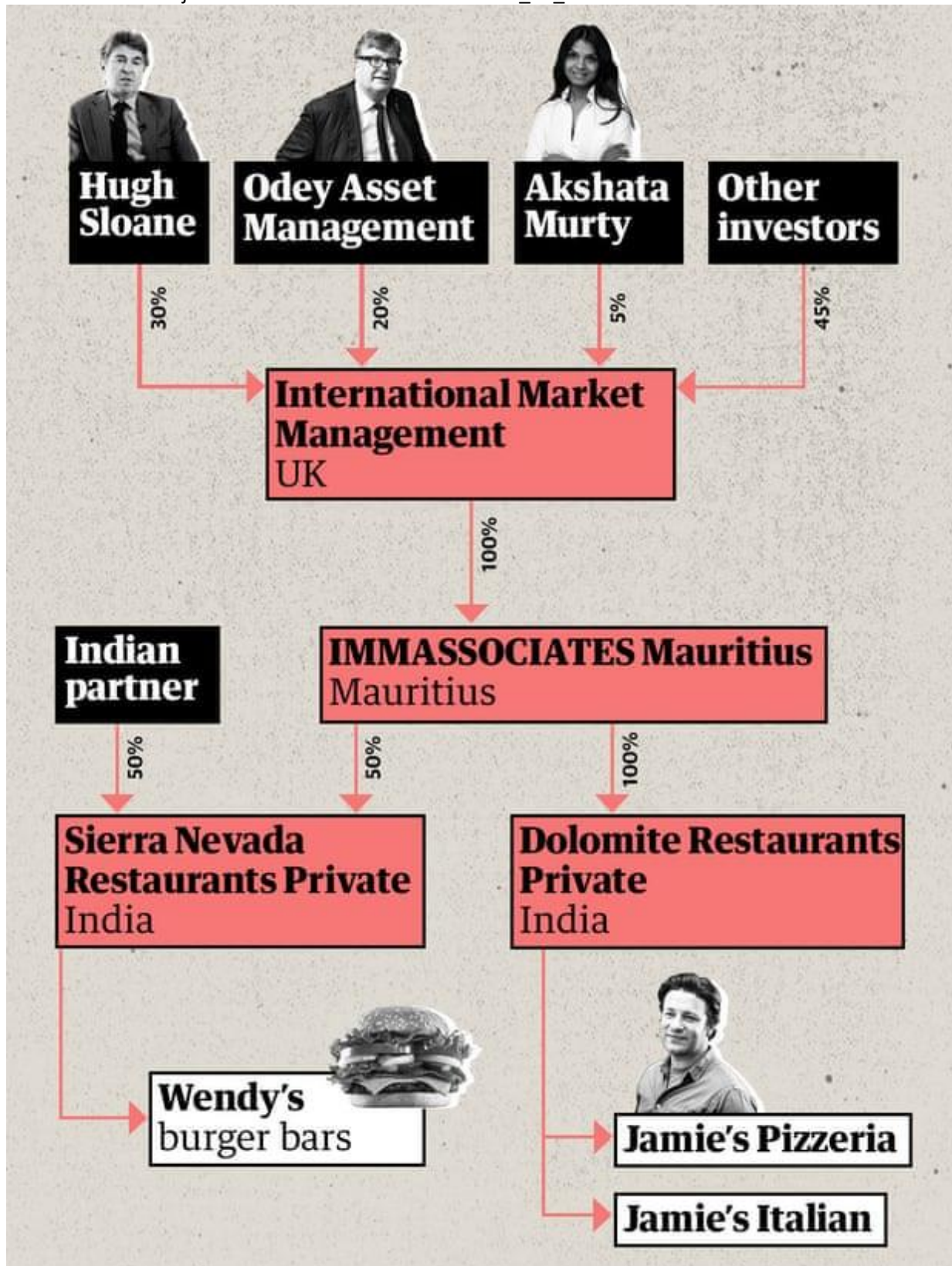


Illustration: Guardian Design

After reviewing the IMM structure, experts from the Indian Revenue Service and the **Independent Commission for the Reform of International Corporate Taxation**, a campaign group, concluded the arrangement could reduce the taxes payable on any profits in India.

If the business is sold, there will be no tax on any capital gain in India. Had IMM invested directly, it would have been liable to pay the Indian government 20% on any capital gain, at current rates. The setup also reduces the amount of tax payable on dividends in India, from 10% to 5%.

It seems IMM's administrators were aware of the tax advantages when they set up their intermediary company, IMMASSOCIATES Mauritius, according to papers seen by the Guardian. A form filled in for the offshore services firm that acted for them asked: "Will the company be seeking to take advantage of Mauritius' network of double taxation agreements?" IMM's administrators ticked the box for "yes", and the box for "India".

Give details, as fully as possible, of the proposed business of the new entity and the business of the Group of which it may form part. *Must include the country of investment (where applicable) and target sector of investment or if dealing in securities must specify whether quoted or unquoted securities.*

The proposed Company will own and run restaurants in India. It will also own the rights to run certain restaurants in India

Will the new Mauritius Company be seeking to invest in India? Yes ☒ No ☐

If affirmative, an undertaking will be required from or on behalf of the promoter that no funds derived from sources within India from Indian residents will be accepted for investment purposes unless appropriate written approval from the relevant Indian Authorities have been obtained.

4. Double Taxation Agreement (applicable only GBC 1)

Will the new Company be seeking to take advantage of Mauritius' network of Double Taxation Agreements? Yes ☒ No ☐

If affirmative please tick the relevant DTA country(ies)

Australia	<input type="checkbox"/>	Barbados	<input type="checkbox"/>	Belgium	<input type="checkbox"/>
Botswana	<input type="checkbox"/>	China	<input type="checkbox"/>	Croatia	<input type="checkbox"/>
Cyprus	<input type="checkbox"/>	France	<input type="checkbox"/>	Germany	<input type="checkbox"/>
India	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Italy	<input type="checkbox"/>	Kuwait	<input type="checkbox"/>
Lesotho	<input type="checkbox"/>	Luxembourg	<input type="checkbox"/>	Madagascar	<input type="checkbox"/>
Malaysia	<input type="checkbox"/>	Mozambique	<input type="checkbox"/>	Namibia	<input type="checkbox"/>
Nepal	<input type="checkbox"/>	Oman	<input type="checkbox"/>	Pakistan	<input type="checkbox"/>
Rwanda	<input type="checkbox"/>	Senegal	<input type="checkbox"/>	Seychelles	<input type="checkbox"/>
Singapore	<input type="checkbox"/>	South Africa	<input type="checkbox"/>	Sri Lanka	<input type="checkbox"/>
Swaziland	<input type="checkbox"/>	Sweden	<input type="checkbox"/>	Thailand	<input type="checkbox"/>
Tunisia	<input type="checkbox"/>	Uganda	<input type="checkbox"/>	U.A.E	<input type="checkbox"/>
United Kingdom	<input type="checkbox"/>	Zimbabwe	<input type="checkbox"/>	Qatar	<input type="checkbox"/>
Bangladesh	<input type="checkbox"/>	Zambia	<input type="checkbox"/>		

5. Shareholders, Directors and Officers

5A. KYC Documents

A copy of the form. Illustration: Guardian Design

The IMM chief executive, Jasper Reid, who manages the venture from New Delhi, said: "This is a standard approach to companies investing in India and is nothing out of the ordinary." Murty and Odey Asset Management declined to comment. Sloane did not respond to a request for comment.

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“If the minimising of Indian tax revenues is ‘standard’ for British investors, that’s not a justification, it’s a condemnation,” said Alex Cobham, the chief executive of the campaign group **Tax Justice Network**. “India needs its tax revenues for schools and hospitals. We must hope that the chancellor himself is committed to the progressive taxation of wealth and top incomes, or the UK will only see the deepening of the stark individual, racial, gender and regional inequalities that the pandemic has laid bare.”

IMM’s tax structure is legal, but controversial. The use of Mauritius as a conduit for capital into India has become notorious. A collection of islands in the Indian Ocean, with a population of 1.3 million, the small state is one of the largest sources of foreign investment into India.

By setting up letterbox companies in Mauritius – essentially shell companies with no staff and no trading activity – investors can channel money from Indian businesses to the tax haven. Investments routed through Mauritius are **estimated to have cost** India between \$10bn and \$15bn over the last 20 years in lost capital gains tax, dividends tax, and tax on interest and royalty payments.

The system has been used by foreign investors, but also by Indian nationals, who essentially send their funds on a round trip. There is no suggestion Murty was round-tripping her investment.

Murty’s family fortune comes from India, where her father co-founded the IT company Infosys. She is now resident in the UK.

“The Mauritian route to investing in India had been a reason for concern for the Indian government and civil society for decades,” said Neeti Biyani, of the non-profit Centre for Budget and Government Accountability. “This trend has caused developing countries like India to lose out on crucial revenue, that could have been used for realising human rights, funding public services and financing development.”

Tax revenues lost thanks to offshore arrangements are said to have hampered India’s ability to meet its **child rights obligations**. In an effort to shut down the loophole, the Indian government renegotiated its tax treaty with Mauritius last year. However, because IMM invested before 2017, it should still benefit from the terms of the previous treaty, experts said.

Any tax advantage is theoretical at the moment, as the latest company filings in India show IMM’s restaurants have yet to make a profit. The investors would also be liable for personal taxes on any income earned. In the UK, these could be as high as 38% for top-bracket earners receiving dividends.

However, the owners are optimistic. According to the latest accounts, the subsidiary operating the Wendy’s burger bars is “poised for rapid expansion”, and plans to grow to 50 outlets over the next five years.

Language etiquette [how to not do microaggressions]

People often worry about saying the wrong thing when talking to people with a disability. If you are unsure about how to say something, ask the person what they prefer. Respectful language about disability and disabled people should be used even if a disabled person is not present.

Never describe people by their impairments eg 'an epileptic', or 'a diabetic'.

People without a disability should be described as 'non-disabled' rather than 'able bodied' as people with learning difficulties or mental health problems may consider themselves as disabled.

Don't be embarrassed about using common expressions such as 'see you later' in front of someone who has a visual impairment or 'you'll hear from me soon' to someone who is deaf or hard of hearing.

More Information – For more information on disability etiquette, visit the [Office of Disability issues\(external link\)](#).

Overview of Etiquette of Disability

Or How to Avoid Microaggressions, invalidating or Disempowering

Able people sometimes feel that disabled people are too sensitive, when they carelessly disempower them or invalidate them.



But they have never been on the receiving end of the comment that they just dished out to the disabled person. They have never walked in their wheelchair or shoes, or even thought about walking in their shoes at all.

Without realising it, they have **microaggressed** the disabled person. The concept of **microaggression** was first described in relation to race relations in USA. Transgender and intersex people picked up that the concept applies to how they are often treated in broader society. Soon it was realised to be a broader concept that applies to almost all marginalised groups of people.

"The Language of Violence" by Lorri Mackness is a description of **microaggressions** and social invisibility experienced by disabled women.

Setting policies for the support of disabled women requires understanding of the impacts of life in our society and the costs of supports, to enable full social participation, despite these disability impacts. It has been observed that the total impact of multiple disabilities is almost invariably more than the total of the impacts taken individually.

Intersectionality is a recent concept and using it in practical situations is poorly developed. The immaturity of study of intersectionality is presently limiting its practical application in setting appropriate support policies. Disabled people have a high degree of reliance on their caregivers. This makes them vulnerable to The **Stockholm Syndrome** and disempowers them.

To give disabled people **equality of opportunity** requires giving improved supports, so that as far as possible, they can **participate fully in our society**. See Ch 34 Equity text Sunyata Sen opportunity.pdf

Microaggressions

This pages is cut down from: <https://medium.com/@deltabmckenzie/a-crash-course-in-racial-microaggression-65f4f95692e6>

The original article was by Delta B. McKenzie.

[microaggression](#) may be based on many categories, race, height, sex, gender, ableness, ability, culture....To understand microaggressions it is helpful to study microaggression impacts on several of these categories.

The term [microaggression](#) refers to language, behaviour or situations that might or might not be intentional but which communicates a level of hostility and negativity towards a specific group of people.

Microaggression is broken into three main forms.

1. Microassault
2. Microinsult
3. Microinvalidation

A microassault is a form of explicit racial derogation. A microassault ranges from name-calling to avoidant behaviour.

Microassaults tend to be deliberate acts that the perpetrator will only indulge in when they are in a private setting, hence the micro.

It's being called coloured by the so-called older generation who don't know better. It's sitting on the bus only to have the person beside you move to another seat usually to sit beside someone of their own skin colour.

These are small instances that cause people of colour to feel less than. There's nothing they can report without seeming 'sensitive' or over the top. It's easier to internalize the pain that these situations cause us.

It's not right but what can you do?

Choosing between your dignity and your job is difficult and a lot of these [microassaults](#) never get reported because of this.

A **microinsult** is a form of communication that demeans a person's racial heritage (or in the widest sense their identity).

These are basically snubs with a racial undertone.

"You sound like a White woman."

No, I sound intelligent and you assumed that a Black woman can't sound intelligent. That sounds like a you problem.

"I'm so glad our company's diversity program helped you get a job."

Of course, it was the diversity program and not my grades or my experience that got me this job, just the colour of my skin.

It is to be noted that often times people aren't aware of the double meaning of their speech, however this does not in any way diminish the impact it has on people of colour.

Microinvalidation is communication that seeks to nullify or dismiss the experiences of a specific group. Or even more cruelly, dismisses the identity of the person being deprecated.

One of the examples used in the mentioned article is one that I've heard countless times over the past few days in response to the Black Lives Matter movement. "We are all human beings."

Helms 1992 found that this statement was often used to negate the experiences that people faced.

It was a verbal form of blinkers, if you would.

We're all human beings so you can't possibly have experienced something that I haven't just because of your skin colour. That can't possibly be true. It's an easy way to dismiss the damage caused by racism without ever having to truly acknowledge it. The truth of the matter is microaggressions are so woven into the fabric of society that removing it seems like a daunting task.

But the first step to bettering ourselves is to listen.

Listen when people of colour tell you they're not okay with what you said or how you acted.

Listen when a Black woman says that referring to her as exotic is a form of fetishization and not a compliment.

Listen when people tell you to not use a specific word because it's a slur.

Listen to the people who are being hurt instead of your own bruised pride.

Microaggressions by [Sonny Nordmarken](#)

doi: [10.1215/23289252-2399812](#)

TSQ 2014 Volume 1, Number 1-2: 129-134

Microaggression may be based on many categories, race, height, sex, gender, ableness, ability, culture...To understand microaggressions, it is helpful to study microaggression impacts on several of these categories.

The article below discusses microaggression impacts onto transpeople. Just by replacing the word transpeople with disabled people, this article will fairly well describe impacts of microaggressions onto disabled people. If a person doesn't understand the general topic of microaggressions, it is easy to be blissfully unaware of how seriously they can impact onto other people.

Microaggressions are commonplace, interpersonally communicated, "othering" messages related to a person's perceived marginalized status ([Pierce et al. 1977](#); [Sue 2010](#)). These denigrations are often active manifestations of derogatory stereotypes. Invisible to many deliverers and recipients, they reproduce oppression on the interpersonal level. Examining microaggressions lays bare distinct ways in which gender as a dynamic system of power takes shape in trans and gender-nonconforming people's everyday lives.

Microaggressions are routine in social interaction; all social actors deliver them. These often unconscious and unintentional messages manifest as brief, unthinking slights, snubs, insults, or other indignities, frequently embedded within a stream of communication ([Sue 2010](#)). They are verbal, nonverbal, and environmental, and they can appear in facial expressions, body language, terminology, representation, or remarks. Microaggressions can be confusing to receive, difficult to notice, pinpoint, or recognize, and particularly challenging to address (*ibid.*). Recipients feel microaggressions' cumulative impact in stress and somatic effects comparable to those caused by a catastrophically traumatic event (*ibid.*). Some common effects are: chronic health problems and persistent feelings of alienation, anxiety, anger, depression, fear, hypervigilance, fatigue, hopelessness and/or suicidality ([Goldblum et al. 2012](#); [Grossman and D'Augelli 2007](#); [Kosciw et al. 2010](#); [Pauly 1990](#); [Schrock, Boyd, and Leaf 2009](#)).

Trans and gender-nonconforming people encounter microaggressions in a number of realms in their everyday lives, such as workplaces and public restrooms, and from family members, friends, therapists, medical providers, security workers, and strangers ([Kidd and Witten 2008](#)). Microaggressors express a perception of otherness, which they may associate with one or more characteristics such as disability, race, gender, or class. Some microaggressions are related to a perceived transness or gender nonconformity. For instance, microaggressors scrutinize, exoticize, sexualize, or fetishize trans people ([Nadal, Skolnik, and Wong 2012](#); [Serano 2007](#)), using such terms as "tranny," "she-male," "he-she," or "chicks with dicks"; asking gender- and sex-related questions about a person's body, genitalia, identity, or history; expressing concern about a trans person interacting with children; implying that gender-affirmation surgeries constitute "mutilation" or that trans people are "mentally ill" or "freakish"; approaching non-sex-worker trans women for paid sex; offering intended compliments such as "you turned out so cute" or "I never would have known"; evaluating a person's gender presentation; exposing a person's trans identity ([Nordmarken 2012](#)). Many of these actions reflect erroneous, dehumanizing stereotypes about trans people that are represented in news stories, films, and other media ([Serano 2007](#)). Thus microaggressions maintain cis-sexism, or the idea that trans people are inferior to and less authentic than cisgender (non-trans) people (*ibid.*).

Besides manifesting stereotypes, many microaggressions targeting trans and gender-nonconforming people are active manifestations of conventional ways of thinking about gender. Due to the dearth of accurate information on transgender phenomena in public circulation, microaggressors misunderstand or misinterpret trans and gender-nonconforming people's gender identities, invalidating their experiences of reality and at times conflating sexual nonnormativity with gender nonnormativity. Microaggressors address trans people with incorrect gender pronouns, call them by former names, inquire about their "real" identity, ask them to explain their gender identity, and deny or fail to acknowledge their pronouns, name, or identity ([Nadal, Skolnik, and Wong 2012](#); [Nordmarken 2012](#); [Nordmarken and Kelly, forthcoming](#)). This "misgendering" takes place because microaggressors assume that they have the ability to know a trans person's "true" identity and that their perception of a trans person is more valid than the trans person's own self-knowledge — what Julia Serano calls "gender entitlement" (2007: 9). Gender entitlement and the cultural conflation of sexed anatomy and gender identity result in a rhetoric of deception, where microaggressors cast trans people as "deceivers" or "pretenders" who "hide" what microaggressors imagine are trans people's "true selves" ([Bettcher 2007](#)). Some microaggressors intend to legitimate trans people's identities but, problematically, assume that all trans people are the same ([Nadal, Skolnik, and Wong 2012](#)). They might apply the "wrong body" narrative to those who do not experience their gender in such a way ([Nordmarken and Kelly, forthcoming](#)).

Microaggressors may communicate disgust, dismissal, apprehension, confusion, shock, surprise, skepticism, disbelief, agitation, or other discomfort when noticing or being alerted to a person's transness. They can become defensive when corrected or reminded about their misuse of pronouns ([Nadal, Rivera, and Corpus 2010](#)). They may stare, do double takes, avoid eye contact or proximity, look away, laugh, or become silent ([Nordmarken 2012, 2014](#); [Nordmarken and Kelly, forthcoming](#)). They may make excuses for or apologize excessively for misgendering, drawing more attention to and drawing out the uncomfortable interaction ([Nordmarken 2012](#)); conversely, they may deny that they have communicated something cis-sexist or transphobic or they may deny that cis-sexism and transphobia exist ([Nadal, Skolnik, and Wong 2012](#)). Regardless of intention, microaggressive behaviors often indicate that individuals perceive difference, communicating othering messages.

Although many trans people encounter microaggressions, they have varied experiences. Various institutionalized oppression systems, such as sexism, racism, poverty, and ageism exacerbate the impact of transphobia. Across trans populations, multiply marginalized groups encounter the most discrimination. Socioeconomically disadvantaged trans people experience the highest rates of discrimination and violence ([Lombardi et al. 2001](#)). Trans people of color encounter more discrimination than white trans people, and African American trans people encounter the most of all racial groups ([Grant et al. 2011](#)). Trans women and other trans-feminine people contend with trans-misogyny, or a combination of transphobia, cis-sexism, and misogyny ([Serano 2007](#)). They thus encounter particular kinds of gendered microaggressions that certain trans men and trans-masculine people avoid. For example, in the workplace, employers tend to demote or fire transitioning trans women or dock their pay, while they tend to support transitioning trans men, incorporating them into patriarchal social hierarchies ([Schilt 2010](#); [Schilt and Wiswall 2008](#)). Ageism also intensifies trans people's vulnerabilities. Trans youth and elders whose families reject them face homelessness and/or abuse at the hands of their caregivers ([Denny 2007](#); [Witten and Eyer 1999](#); [Witten and Whittle 2005](#)).

The translation of stereotype into action can have far-reaching, overtly oppressive, systemic effects, from pathologization to murder. A complete picture of the subjugation trans people contend with is beyond the scope of this article, but a brief overview follows. The idea that trans people are mentally ill is institutionalized in psychiatric texts such as the *Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders* ([American Psychiatric Association 2013](#)) and thus also in medical and legal transition routes. Many social institutions and sites of social life, such as medical systems, workplaces, families, and religious communities openly exclude trans people ([Flynn 2006](#); [Grant et al. 2011](#)). State programs and institutions, such as public medical systems, prisons, and immigration detention centers, host regular harassment and abuse, refuse trans people services, and, at times, host violence ([Benson 2008–9](#); [Gehi and Arkles 2007](#); [Howe, Zaraysky, and Lorentzen 2008](#); [Namaste 2000](#); [O'Day-Senior 2008](#); [Spade 2011](#)). In addition, trans individuals face harassment, threats, and violence on the street and in other public spaces ([Kidd and Witten 2008](#)). While overt denigrations are not microaggressions, they represent the systemic effects of *unacknowledged injustice*, maintaining an institution of cis-sexism and a cis-normative culture that privileges and normalizes cisgender experiences. Thus the invisibility of microaggressions and other cis-sexist actions plays a significant role in maintaining the power of the dominant gender system.

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How to Respond to Microaggressions NYT

Should you let that comment slide, or address it head on? Is it more harm than it's worth? We can help.

<https://www.nytimes.com/2020/03/03/smarter-living/how-to-respond-to-microaggressions.html>



Credit...De rek Abella

By Hahna Yoon

March 3, 2020

For many of us, microaggressions are so commonplace that it seems impossible to tackle them one at a time. Psychologists often compare them to death by a thousand cuts.

The metaphor is both the subtitle to a paper that Kevin Nadal, professor of psychology at John Jay College, wrote about the [impact of microaggressions on L.G.B.T.Q. youth](#), and the title of another paper on [the health implications of black respectability politics](#) by Hedwig Lee, professor of sociology at Washington University in St. Louis, and Margaret Takako Hicken, research assistant professor at the University of Michigan. The phrase is commonly found in additional studies on the topic.

I felt my thousandth cut a few Novembers ago standing outside a bar as my friend's boyfriend explained to me the concept of American Thanksgiving. From the time in fourth grade when my teacher made me read the part of "slanted-eyed child" in a play to every time a stranger in the

online dating world told me he “loves Asian women,” I have been pressed with the dilemma of how I should react to these seemingly small lacerations. Should I respond? Is it worth it?

When I tell people that I am writing about microaggressions, most — even some of my closest friends who are women of color — ask me why. It’s tempting to ignore microaggressions, considering blatant, obvious discrimination is still a real problem, but the buildup of these “everyday slights” has consequences on a victim’s mental and physical health that cannot be overlooked. The normalization of microaggressions is antithetical to a well-rounded society with equal opportunities for marginalized individuals.

So many of us ask the same questions: Was that really a microaggression? Is this worth tackling? What should I say and how should I cope? Or worse, we’ve convinced ourselves that the questions are not even worth asking. Dancing in circles myself, I weigh in with experts who have witnessed microaggressive acts and had them share their insights based on years of research and data.

What is a microaggression?

Originally coined in the 1970s by Chester M. Pierce, a Harvard psychiatrist, [today’s definition of a microaggression](#) can be credited to Derald Wing Sue, a professor of counseling psychology at Columbia University. Since 2007, he has written several books on microaggressions, including “Microaggressions in Everyday Life: Race, Gender, and Sexual Orientation.” In it, Dr. Sue writes that microaggressions are the everyday slights, indignities, put-downs and insults that members of marginalized groups experience in their day-to-day interactions with individuals who are often unaware that they have engaged in an offensive or demeaning way.

Microaggressions are often discussed in a racial context, but anyone in a marginalized group — be it as a result of their gender, sexual orientation, disability or religion — can experience one.

Microaggressions can be as overt as watching a person of color in a store for possible theft and as subtle as discriminatory comments disguised as compliments.

[The first step to addressing a microaggression](#) is to recognize that one has occurred and dissect what message it may be sending, Dr. Sue said. To question where someone is from, for instance, may seem fairly innocuous but implicitly delivers the message that you are an outsider in your own land: “You are not a true American.” Subtle actions, like a white person’s clutching a purse closer as a darker-skinned person approaches, are nonverbal assumptions of criminality and examples of microaggressions.

While there has been debate about the definition of microaggressions and how they should be addressed, Dr. Sue says their existence is impossible to dispute. “When I talk about the concept of microaggressions to a large audience of people of color and women, I’m not telling them anything new, but it provides them with a language to describe the experiences and the realization that they’re not crazy,” he said.

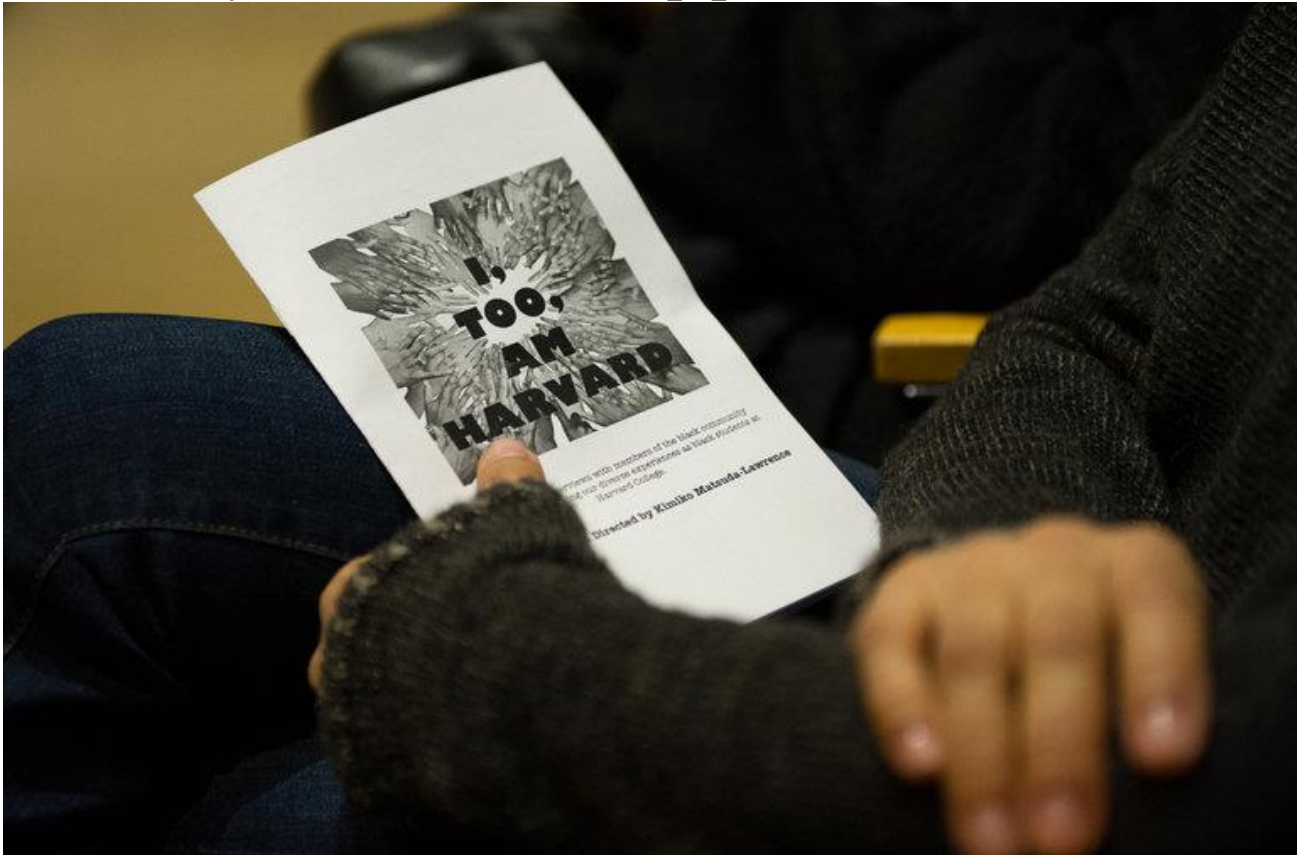
‘You Don’t Want to Make It a Big Deal, but It Is’

A play at Harvard explored microaggressions and their impact.

VIDEO

Microaggressions: Comments That Sting

March 21, 2014



Recognize the real consequences of microaggressions

Discrimination — no matter how subtle — has consequences. In 2017, the Center for Health Journalism explained that racism and microaggressions [lead to worse health](#), and pointed out that discrimination can negatively influence everything from a target person's eating habits to his or her trust in their physician, and trigger symptoms of trauma. [A 2014 study of 405 young adults of color](#) even found that experiencing microaggressions can lead to suicidal thoughts.

For many members of marginalized groups, it is easy to believe that simply growing a thick skin will provide protection from these experiences. However, Dr. Nadal argues that the consequences of microaggressions are real, whether or not you believe yourself to be numb to them.

“Experiencing the spectrum of racism — from microaggressions to systemic oppression to hate violence, may negatively affect people whether someone is aware of it at all,” Dr. Nadal said. “If the person who committed the microaggression is in your life, it can always be worth bringing up. In the same way that a family member or friend may hurt you and it takes years to recover, the impact of a microaggression can be long-lasting too.”

Pick your battles

When discussing microaggressions, people from privileged backgrounds often say marginalized individuals are simply overreacting. Dr. Alisia G.T.T. Tran, an associate professor of counseling and counseling psychology at Arizona State University, disagrees. She says that most people actually ignore and shake off a lot of microaggressions. “They have no choice, they're so common, and you can't fight every battle — but these things can stay with you or build up,” she said. She and many other psychologists say that responding to a microaggression can be empowering, but with so many battles, how do you decide which to fight?

To help, Dr. Nadal developed a tool kit called the [Guide to Responding to Microaggressions](#). It lists five questions to ask yourself when weighing the consequences of responding to a microaggression.

If I respond, could my physical safety be in danger?

If I respond, will the person become defensive and will this lead to an argument?

If I respond, how will this affect my relationship with this person (e.g., co-worker, family member, etc.)

If I don't respond, will I regret not saying something?

If I don't respond, does that convey that I accept the behavior or statement?

Diane Goodman, a social justice and diversity consultant, says the process is unfair, but having to decide whether or not to take action is inevitable in today's society. "The emotional labor should not have to fall on people from marginalized groups. In the real world, people are confronted with microaggressions and people need to decide what they want to do."

Before moving forward with confronting the microaggression, she recommends you assess the goals of your response: Do you simply want to be heard? Or are you more interested in educating the other person and letting them know they did something wrong?

Microinterventions: Disarm a microaggression

Even once you have decided that you can respond to a microaggression, knowing what to say or how to behave can be nerve-racking. In his research on disarming microaggressions, Dr. Sue uses the term "[microintervention](#)" to describe the process of confronting a microaggression. "Unless adequately armed with strategies, microaggressions may occur so quickly they are oftentimes over before a counteracting response can be made," he said.

While your response will vary by situation, context and relationship, Dr. Goodman recommends memorizing these three tactics from her list of [prepared statements](#).

Ask for more clarification: "Could you say more about what you mean by that?" "How have you come to think that?"

Separate intent from impact: "I know you didn't realize this, but when you _____ (comment/behavior), it was hurtful/offensive because _____. Instead you could _____ (different language or behavior.)"

Share your own process: "I noticed that you _____ (comment/behavior). I used to do/say that too, but then I learned _____."

One principle underlying these statements is helping the aggressor understand she or he is not under attack for their comment. "If we want people to hear what we're saying and potentially change their behavior, we have to think about things that will not immediately make them defensive," Dr. Goodman said.

How to respond to microaggressions in the digital space

It happens all the time — a friend of yours likes a racist comment on Facebook or a co-worker shares a meme with misogynist undertones. How can you respond when communicating online seems so visible and permanent?

[According to research by Robert Eschmann](#), an assistant professor at Boston University's School of Social Work, the visibility of microaggressions also means you can have like-minded allies step in to respond with you. "When you experience a microaggression when you're by yourself," Dr. Eschmann said, "there is no one else that can validate that experience for you. When you're online, you can have lots of eyes on it and more people that can call it out and say that's wrong."

Another tactic Dr. Nadal suggests is to send links to articles that identify the microaggression. "It can be exhausting to have to explain microaggressions each time you encounter them; however, copying and pasting a link may be a simple tactic to use." After you send the link and call out the microaggression, it is also important to identify when the person you are speaking to is actually open to a conversation.

Dr. Sue reminds us that so much of what happens online are monologues and not dialogues. "To me, responding to microaggressions online are a waste of time, because I don't think — unless I have time to interact with the person on a personal level — I will be able to effect any change," he said. Knowing when to step away and shut off the screen, especially when you sense a dead end, is crucial to self-care, he adds.

Choose self-care

Learning to draw boundaries and find support among allies is one of the most important steps in dealing with microaggressions.

For those looking for an immersive experience, [one Psychology Today article suggests](#) a process of radical healing — developing pride in your community, sharing stories with people from it and taking action to make changes on a local and political level, reflecting on the challenges of your ancestors and practicing self-care by staying healthy — physically and spiritually.

Self-care, however, can be as simple as having a few friends to discuss common experiences with. Shardé M. Davis, a professor of communication at the University of Connecticut, has studied [supportive communication about microaggressions](#) among groups of black women and finds that talking can facilitate the coping process. Although Dr. Davis's study was limited to black women, she believes the spirit of what that represents could easily translate to other groups of people.

6 Ways A Black Person Can Tell A White Person Isn't Racist

It's not that complicated



Rebecca Stevens A.

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Jan 24 · 4 min read

<https://medium.com/illumination-curated/6-ways-a-black-person-can-tell-a-white-person-isnt-racist-252349f36076>



Photo by [Wadi Lissa](#) on [Unsplash](#)

Black people can detect racists from a mile off. It's the way they look at us — it's often a look of disgust, deep hatred, or fear, and it shows. The minute we approach you, we can feel it — call it our sixth sense or survival instinct.

Because we can feel that racism, we know we have to keep our guard up lest you try to harm us. There are of course some white people that have perfected the art of hiding their racism: closet racists. Sometimes we don't spot those soon, but it's a matter of time—when and not if—they'll make a crucial mistake that will lay bare their ugly, racist, selves.

I'm no expert in sniffing out racists— I'll admit it here, I've been tricked many a time. But one thing I've learned is that they will always, always show their true selves at one point. Sometimes maybe even years after you've met them and actually consider them your friends.

This was the case with a white lady I worked with for many years. I was shocked at the derogatory comments she made about an Asian girl that I hired. It blew me away. This white lady went out of her way to spread the crassest rumors about my direct report based on sex-related stereotypes about Asian women. It was appalling.

White people that are not racist have these 6 characteristics:

When they meet a Black person, they don't start staring or examining you like a specimen under a microscope. They make eye contact and speak to you like they would any other human being. You can feel that they are relaxed and don't feel intimidated by you. They don't start fixating your nose or your mouth or your Black skin. So many white people do that. Don't they realize how awkward and strange it is to stare? White people that aren't racist don't say stuff like: *"It's the first time I've met a Black person or there are not many Black people here"*. They don't make race the topic of discussion when they don't even know you, only racists do that because they feel so self-conscious and are worried that their racism is showing.

You immediately feel like the person considers you like their equal. They don't try to act as though they are superior to you. They are not patronizing or condescending. They don't infantilize you either. They don't say stuff like, *"You're not like other Black people"*. They are respectful and don't speak over you. You feel that they are actively listening to you when you engage with them.

If you report a racist incident to them, they'll listen to you and believe you. They won't try to gaslight you or question what you've said. White people that aren't racist know that racism exists in the world and that Black people suffer from it. They aren't naive. They won't say stuff like *"Are you sure it was racism or racism is a thing of the past"*.

White people that aren't racist won't repeat dumb stereotypes about Black people. They won't assume that you can run fast, eat chicken, or sing well just because you are Black. They don't make stupid racist jokes. They won't immediately assume that the Black person is guilty if there is an altercation. They are aware of how pernicious stereotypes can ruin Black peoples' lives.

White people that aren't racist act. They don't sit on their backsides all day saying that Black Lives Matter without doing a single thing to show that they do. They go out and find a Black talent to mentor, they hire Black talent, they donate to organizations and individuals leading the fight against racism. These people are not performative individuals, they are authentic and they do real things to drive the fight against racism.

White people that aren't racist educate themselves about racism and anti-racism. They want to know where their "blind spots" are. They want to understand. These people do that hard work even if it means questioning everything that they have ever been taught. They understand when it's time to put aside their white fragility to comprehend why for example,

George Floyd and so many others didn't stand a chance. These white people can become some of the strongest allies of antiracism.

In conclusion, if we are ever to get rid of racism one day, we imperatively need to have more white people that aren't racists speaking up when they witness racial injustices — in their personal lives and in the workplace.

In the wake of George Floyd's death, we were able to see what happens when everyone — globally says "no" to racism. I know many will say that not much has happened since, but I would argue that there is a lot happening, the world has changed since the global racial reckoning in 2020. It might not be visible to everyone, but trust me when I say, that things are no longer the same. I'm an optimist and I'm already dreaming about a post-racial society. I know it is within our reach.

Thank you for reading my perspective.

Microaggressions Sound Minor, But They're No Laughing Matter

The word might sound silly but the phenomenon is real.



Tim Wise

<https://timjwise.medium.com/microaggressions-sound-minor-but-theyre-no-laughing-matter-fb37340f2e82>

Jan 11·8 min read



Photo by [Fausto García-Menéndez](#) on [Unsplash](#)

It's become almost a hobby for some — to make light of racism and other forms of bias, unless they manifest in the most extreme ways possible.

Anything short of an out-and-out hate crime gets dismissed as mere words, which, unlike the proverbial sticks and stones, can't hurt anyone unless that person "lets them."

On this account, if you allow comments or jokes to bother you — or get knocked off stride by what we now know as "microaggressions" — it's because you've *chosen* to adopt victimhood, either out of weakness or a manipulative desire for sympathy.

Anything short of an out-and-out hate crime gets dismissed as mere words, which, unlike the proverbial sticks and stones, can't hurt anyone unless that person "lets them."

According to many, these minor acts of invalidation — at least, by comparison to vicious and deliberate acts of hatred — should be brushed off.

They'll say things like:

"You need to get a thicker skin to survive in the world."

Or, "People can be jerks, but you can't let them get to you."

Or, worse, "Making a big deal over trivial comments or jokes makes it harder to get people to take *real* racism seriously when it happens — you're undermining your cause! It's like the boy who cried wolf!"

These are all things people have said to me, as someone who writes about racism, and far more than just once or twice.

Spoiler alert: People who say these things are assholes.

And they aren't very good with the Google machine either.

First, what are "microaggressions?"

It's increasingly common to hear the term "microaggressions," whether among those who work on issues of race, gender, and sexuality or on the lips of comedians and others seeking to mock the concept.

To the former, microaggressions are a serious concern, with tangible and hurtful impacts for their targets.

To the latter, the entire notion is just another example of hyper-sensitive Gen Y crybabies who need every room into which they enter to be a safe space.

But most who discuss the concept, either genuinely or derisively, fail to define or explain what they're talking about.

The term microaggression [originated](#) with Harvard psychiatrist Chester Pierce but has been popularized thanks to the work of Columbia University professor Derald Wing Sue.

According to Sue:

Microaggressions are everyday slights, indignities, put-downs, and insults that members of marginalized groups experience in their day-to-

day interactions with individuals who are often unaware that they have engaged in an offensive or demeaning way.

To some, the mere fact that those guilty of microaggressions are unaware of the problematic nature of their actions is enough to make such actions unworthy of concern. To this way of thinking, only intentional, deliberate malice constitutes *real* racism (or whatever other ism we might be talking about).

If there is no hostile intent, there can be no real foul.

I've discussed this before, both [here](#) and [here](#), and won't rehash the arguments therein, other than the core point: Intent, though perhaps meaningful for determining the character of a perpetrator, is inherently flawed when it comes to determining if an injury has occurred to a victim.

Injury can occur without intent — a statement no one would think to question in any other area of life but this one.

Microaggressions, even when not intended to harm, can do so. What are some examples? Among those I've witnessed or that can be found throughout the relevant literature, they would include:

Clutching your purse when you see a Black male coming your way or entering the elevator with you;

Crossing the street when you see a Black person walking towards you to avoid them, even though the person has done nothing, behaviorally, to suggest they were dangerous;

Asking Asian Americans or Latino folks where they're from and not being satisfied when they say "Minneapolis" or "San Diego" because you meant where their *families* were from — even if they have been in the U.S. for five generations;

Telling a Black person or another person of color how articulate they are, in settings where one would be *expected* to be articulate — as if somehow you were shocked that they had managed to string together sentences in proper English;

Expressing amazement or confusion, or asking if you're in the right classroom when an Asian American, Latina, or Black professor walks in on the first day of class to teach English literature;

Asking a Black person if they've ever witnessed a drive-by shooting in situations where you're *not* an attorney, and they're *not* the witness in a case involving such an event;

Mansplaining some concept to a woman, even when she has a degree in the subject and has perhaps written a book about the topic that you — the man — think you understand better;

Consistently mixing up the names of folks of color at work or in class in ways you don't with white people;

Having difficulty pronouncing the names of persons of color, but rather than asking how to pronounce them and striving to do so correctly, butchering them, laughing about it, and asking if you can call these individuals by different names or initials because it's easier for you to remember; or finally,

Making comments that suggest you believe any Black person in your college or an executive position at work is only there because of some diversity initiative and not because of their abilities.

Individually, and if they only happened once or twice, perhaps such things would be relatively inconsequential. But imagine this kind of thing — micro though it is in isolation — happened repeatedly.

Imagine that these invalidating experiences, which called into question your competence, law-abidingness, and even *belonging*, occurred again and again.

Multiple times a month, or even multiple times a week. For *years*.

Imagine you had to constantly justify your presence in the school, workplace, neighborhood, or the country itself to people who seemed unconvinced that you deserved to be in any of these.

Would that feel *micro* to you?

The harms of microaggressions

Although some have attempted to downplay the harm of microaggression, even casting doubt on the validity of the concept — let alone our ability to measure the injury caused by such action — research has more than [demonstrated the](#) scientific legitimacy of the idea.

Critiques by skeptics have been [thoroughly addressed](#), and convincingly so, by scholars in the field.

Indeed [the concept](#) of microaggressions and the evidence of the harm they cause is now so [well accepted](#) and documented in the [health literature](#) that the only way one can continue to mock it is to have studiously avoided doing even the bare minimum of research.

Or, I suppose, by simply being such a smug and entitled member of a dominant social group (or several) that you can't imagine being regularly targeted by dismissive and minimizing comments and actions because of some immutable characteristic.

Shorter version: privilege much?

Among the [harms of microaggressions](#), research has identified:

A reduced sense of [self-esteem](#) and control over one's opportunities, professional success, or academic achievement;

[Depression](#) and anxiety;

[Suicidal ideation](#), resulting from emotional distress;

A reduced quality of care provided by clinicians and received by patients, leading to additional health deficits;

An observable speeding up of the [aging](#) process, due to enhanced stress and physiological impact of that stress on the bodies of those experiencing it; and,

Reduced attention span and the ability to focus on academic or professional tasks, leading to worse outcomes, negatively impacting grades, income, or occupational status.

Don't misunderstand; no one says that one or two incidents will seriously derail someone's education, professional career, or life. Even one or two more severe *macro*-aggressions might not manage to do that. But that's not the point.

What we *are* saying is that these smaller slights add up.

Although each slight in and of itself is minor — unlike a cross burned on one's lawn or being violently assaulted — if one experiences these on a loop, their importance ceases to be minor, and the pain caused ceases to be a mere annoyance.

Over time, the impact of such actions can come to be more than the mere sum of their parts.

And it is only in the area of things like racism, sexism, heterosexism, or transphobia that we would deny this truth.

What makes microaggressions especially hurtful? Ambiguity and systemic inequity

No one would deny that experiencing relatively minor incidents of rudeness regularly at work would tend to wear on people over time. Likewise, if someone is stealing spare change out of my car regularly or perhaps prank calling my phone, no single such act would be that big a deal.

But imagine it happened several times a week. After a while, it would become more than a micro-problem.

And one of the reasons this is so is because you might start to wonder, “what's next?” Is the change thief going to escalate to more serious infractions? Is the prank caller going to begin leaving harassing messages and not just hanging up?

The micro could *turn* macro. And even if it never will — because, in the case of microaggressive racial behavior, it often emanates from individuals acting more from ignorance than malice — one never knows.

It is this uncertainty that knocks people off balance.

Perhaps the worst thing about microaggressions is that precisely because they often *don't* stem from hostile intent, they leave their recipients wondering about the meaning of that last comment, that joke, that look across the room.

And that attributional ambiguity *itself* causes Black folks, for instance, to have to expend valuable cognitive resources just trying to figure out what the hell they're experiencing.

That alone is stressful and exhaustive. It adds one more thing to the plate of those whose plates are already plenty full of shit to deal with today.

And of course, making microaggressions even worse is the fact that they take place against a backdrop of systemic inequity and injustice, which then magnifies their impact as well.

Having one's competence or belonging questioned — or one's law-abidingness — would mean very little but for the systemic and structural inequities in the workforce, schools, and justice system. If Black folks, for instance, didn't experience systemic marginality in those arenas — not just attitudinal bias, but measurable disadvantage — microaggressions wouldn't hit so hard.

But to have those smaller invalidations occurring in an environment where you know how such things can lead to inequalities of condition — and where those unequal conditions are then used as proof that you *deserve* the invalidations you're experiencing — makes the impact exponentially greater.

It becomes a never-ending cycle of personal and institutional disregard and hostility, which leaves its recipients on a hair-trigger.

Sadly, rather than understanding how this hair-trigger operates and its source, too many then accuse Black folks, women, LGBTQ folks and other minoritized individuals of hyper-sensitivity.

We assume they are making a mountain out of the proverbial molehill.

When in truth, it is we who might be making a molehill out of what is actually a mountain.

So the next time someone dismisses the notion of microaggressions, or the next time you find yourself rolling your eyes at the mention of them, remember, just because something may sound like a minor problem doesn't mean it's experienced as such.

Dismissing or mocking the concept of microaggressions makes you sort of an asshole. Don't be an asshole.

It's not like America is currently suffering a shortage of these, after all.

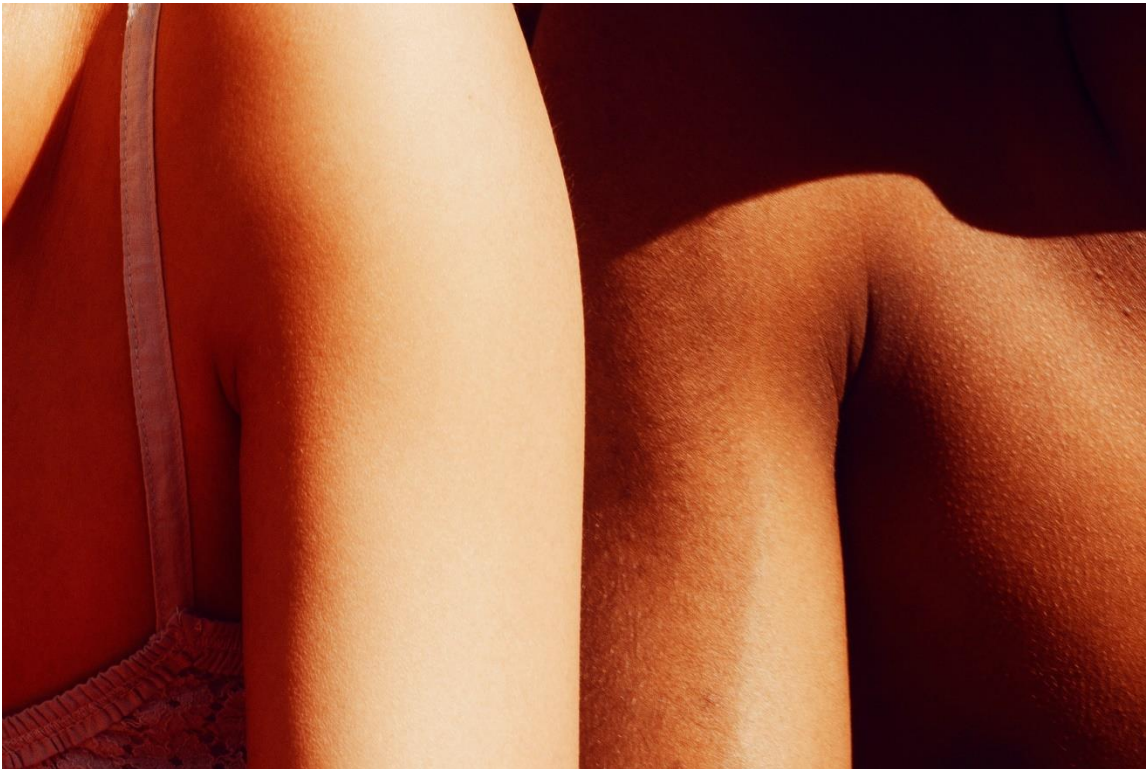
Privilege based on unaccountable Prejudice

A Sociologist Examines the “White Fragility” That Prevents White Americans from Confronting Racism



By Katy Waldman

<https://www.newyorker.com/books/page-turner/a-sociologist-examines-the-white-fragility-that-prevents-white-americans-from-confronting-racism>



Much of Robin DiAngelo's book is dedicated to pulling back the veil on so-called pillars of whiteness: assumptions that prop up racist beliefs without white people realizing it. Photograph by Christopher Anderson / Magnum

In more than twenty years of running diversity-training and cultural-competency workshops for American companies, the academic and educator Robin DiAngelo has noticed that white people are sensationally, histrionically bad at discussing racism. Like waves on sand, their reactions form predictable patterns: they will insist that they “were taught to treat everyone the same,” that they are “color-blind,” that they “don’t care if you are pink, purple, or polka-dotted.” They will point to friends and family members of color, a history of civil-rights activism, or a more “salient” issue, such as class or gender. They will shout and bluster. They will cry. In 2011, DiAngelo coined the term “white fragility” to describe the disbelieving defensiveness that white people exhibit when their ideas about race and racism are challenged—and particularly when they feel implicated in white supremacy. Why, she wondered, did her feedback prompt such resistance, as if the mention of racism were more offensive than the fact or practice of it?

In a new book, “White Fragility,” DiAngelo attempts to explicate the phenomenon of white people’s paper-thin skin. She argues that our largely segregated society is set up to insulate whites from racial discomfort, so that they fall to pieces at the first application of stress—such as, for instance, when someone suggests that “flesh-toned” may not be an appropriate name for a beige crayon. Unused to unpleasantness (more than unused to it—racial hierarchies tell white people that they are entitled to peace and deference), they lack the “racial stamina” to engage in difficult conversations. This leads them to respond to “racial triggers”—the show “Dear White People,” the term “wypipo”—with “emotions such as anger, fear and guilt,” DiAngelo writes, “and behaviors such as argumentation, silence, and withdrawal from the stress-inducing situation.”

DiAngelo, who is white, emphasizes that the stances that make up white fragility are not merely irrational. (Or even comical, though some of her anecdotes—participants in a voluntary anti-racism workshop dissolving with umbrage at any talk of racism—simmer with perverse humor. “I have found that the only way to give feedback without triggering white fragility is not to give it at all,” she remarks wryly.) These splutterings “work,” DiAngelo explains, “to reinstate white equilibrium as they repel the challenge, return our racial comfort, and maintain our dominance within the racial hierarchy.” She finds that the social costs for a black person in awakening the sleeping dragon of white fragility often prove so high that many black people don’t risk pointing out discrimination when they see it. And the expectation of “white solidarity”—white people will forbear from correcting each other’s racial missteps, to preserve the peace—makes genuine allyship elusive. White fragility holds racism in place.

DiAngelo addresses her book mostly to white people, and she reserves her harshest criticism for white liberals like herself (and like me), whom she sees as refusing to acknowledge their own participation in racist systems. “I believe,” she writes, “that *white progressives cause the most daily damage to people of color*.” Not only do these people fail to see their complicity, but they take a self-serving approach to ongoing anti-racism efforts: “To the degree that white progressives think we have arrived, we will put our energy into making sure that others see us as having arrived.” Even the racial beliefs and responses that feel authentic or well-intentioned have likely been programmed by white supremacy, to perpetuate white supremacy. Whites profit off of an American political and economic system that showers advantages on racial “winners” and oppresses racial “losers.” Yet, DiAngelo writes, white people cling to the notion of racial innocence, a form of weaponized denial that positions black people as the “havers” of race and the guardians of racial knowledge. Whiteness, on the other hand, scans as invisible, default, a form of racelessness. “Color blindness,” the argument that race shouldn’t matter, prevents us from grappling with how it does.

Much of “White Fragility” is dedicated to pulling back the veil on these so-called pillars of whiteness: assumptions that prop up racist beliefs without our realizing it. Such ideologies include individualism, or the distinctly white-American dream that one writes one’s own destiny, and objectivity, the confidence that one can free oneself entirely from bias. As a sociologist trained in mapping group patterns, DiAngelo can’t help but regard both precepts as naïve (at best) and arrogant (at worst). To be perceived as an individual, to not be associated with anything negative because of your skin color, she notes, is a privilege largely afforded to white people; although most school shooters, domestic terrorists, and rapists in the United States are white, it is rare to see a white man on the street reduced to a stereotype. Likewise, people of color often endure having their views attributed to their racial identities; the luxury of impartiality is denied them. (In outlining these discrepancies, DiAngelo draws heavily on the words of black writers and scholars—Ta-Nehisi Coates, Toni Morrison, Ijeoma Oluo, Cheryl Harris—although, perhaps surprisingly, she incorporates few present-day interviews with people of color.)

In DiAngelo’s almost epidemiological vision of white racism, our minds and bodies play host to a pathogen that seeks to replicate itself, sickening us in the process. Like a mutating virus, racism shape-shifts in order to stay alive; when its

explicit expression becomes taboo, it hides in coded language. Nor does prejudice disappear when people decide that they will no longer tolerate it. It just looks for ways to avoid detection. “The most effective adaptation of racism over time,” DiAngelo claims, “is the idea that racism is conscious bias held by mean people.” This “good/bad binary,” positing a world of evil racists and compassionate non-racists, is itself a racist construct, eliding systemic injustice and imbuing racism with such shattering moral meaning that white people, especially progressives, cannot bear to face their collusion in it. (Pause on that, white reader. You may have subconsciously developed your strong negative feelings about racism in order to escape having to help dismantle it.) As an ethical thinker, DiAngelo belongs to the utilitarian school, which places less importance on attitudes than on the ways in which attitudes cause harm. Unpacking the fantasy of black men as dangerous and violent, she does not simply fact-check it; she shows the myth’s usefulness to white people—to obscure the historical brutality against African-Americans, and to justify continued abuse.

DiAngelo sometimes adopts a soothing, conciliatory tone toward white readers, as if she were appeasing a child on the verge of a tantrum. “If your definition of a racist is someone who holds conscious dislike of people because of race, then I agree that it is offensive for me to suggest that you are racist when I don’t know you,” she writes. “I also agree that if this is your definition of racism, and you are against racism, then you are not racist. Now breathe. I am not using this definition of racism, and I am not saying that you are immoral. If you can remain open as I lay out my argument, it should soon begin to make sense.” One has the grim hunch that such an approach has been honed over years of placating red-faced white people, workshop participants leaping at any excuse to discount their instructor. DiAngelo, for all the outrageousness she documents, never comes across as anything other than preternaturally calm, patient, and lucid, issuing prescriptions for a better world as if from beneath a blanket of Ativan. Her almost motorized equipoise clarifies the book’s stakes: she cannot afford to lose us, who are so easily lost.

Self-righteousness becomes a seductive complement to “White Fragility,” as gin is to a mystery novel. (“I would never,” I thought, when DiAngelo described the conversation in which her friend dismissed a predominantly black neighborhood as “bad,” unsafe.) Yet the point of the book is that each white person believes herself the exception, one of very few souls magically exempt from a lifetime of racist conditioning. DiAngelo sets aside a whole chapter for the self-indulgent tears of white women, so distraught at the country’s legacy of racist terrorism

that they force people of color to drink from the firehose of their feelings about it.

The book is more diagnostic than solutions-oriented, and the guidelines it offers toward the end—listen, don't center yourself, get educated, think about your responses and what role they play—won't shock any nervous systems. The value in “White Fragility” lies in its methodical, irrefutable exposure of racism in thought and action, and its call for humility and vigilance. Combatting one's inner voices of racial prejudice, sneaky and, at times, irresistibly persuasive, is a life's work. For all the paranoid American theories of being “red-pilled,” of awakening into a many-tentacled liberal/feminist/Jewish conspiracy, the most corrosive force, the ectoplasm infusing itself invisibly through media and culture and politics, is white supremacy.

That's from a white progressive perspective, of course. The conspiracy of racism is hardly invisible to people of color, many of whom, I suspect, could have written this book in their sleep.



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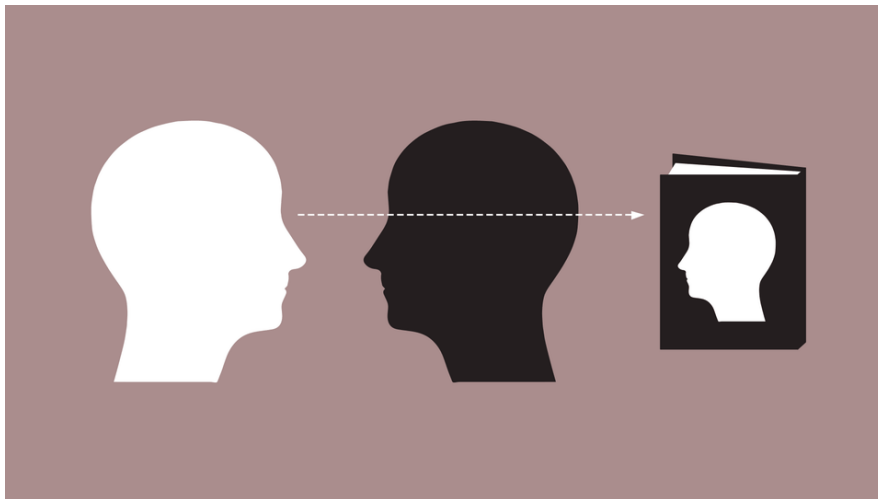
The Dehumanizing Condescension of *White Fragility* [as written by a fragile white man]

<https://www.theatlantic.com/ideas/archive/2020/07/dehumanizing-condescension-white-fragility/614146/>

The popular book aims to combat racism but talks down to Black people.

By John McWhorter

[fragile white man, writing in a fragile white newspaper]



The Atlantic

JULY 15, 2020

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About the author: [John McWhorter](#) is a contributing writer at The Atlantic. He teaches linguistics at Columbia University, hosts the podcast [Lexicon Valley](#), and is the author of the upcoming [Nine Nasty Words: English in the Gutter Then, Now and Always](#).

I MUST ADMIT that I had not gotten around to actually reading Robin DiAngelo’s *White Fragility* until recently. But it was time to jump in. DiAngelo is an education professor and—most prominently today—a diversity consultant who argues that whites in America must face the racist bias implanted in them by a racist society. Their resistance to acknowledging this, she maintains, constitutes a “white fragility” that they must overcome in order for meaningful progress on both interpersonal and societal racism to happen.

White Fragility was published in 2018 but jumped to the top of the *New York Times* best-seller list amid the protests following the death of George Floyd and the ensuing national reckoning about racism. DiAngelo has convinced university administrators, corporate human-resources offices, and no small part of the reading public that white Americans must embark on a self-critical project of looking inward to examine and work against racist biases that many have barely known they had.

I am not convinced. Rather, I have learned that one of America's favorite advice books of the moment is actually a racist tract. Despite the sincere intentions of its author, the book diminishes Black people in the name of dignifying us. This is unintentional, of course, like the racism DiAngelo sees in all whites. Still, the book is pernicious because of the authority that its author has been granted over the way innocent readers think.

Lawrence Glickman: How white backlash controls American progress

READING *WHITE FRAGILITY* is rather like attending a diversity seminar. DiAngelo patiently lays out a rationale for white readers to engage in a self-examination that, she notes, will be awkward and painful. Her chapters are shortish, as if each were a 45-minute session. DiAngelo seeks to instruct.

She operates from the now-familiar concern with white privilege, aware of the unintentional racism ever lurking inside of her that was inculcated from birth by the white supremacy on which America was founded. To atone for this original sin, she is devoted to endlessly exploring, acknowledging, and seeking to undo whites' "complicity with and investment in" racism. To DiAngelo, any failure to do this "work," as adherents of this paradigm often put it, renders one racist.

As such, a major bugbear for DiAngelo is the white American, often of modest education, who makes statements like *I don't see color* or asks questions like *How dare you call me "racist"?* Her assumption that all people have a racist bias is reasonable—science has demonstrated it. The problem is what DiAngelo thinks must follow as the result of it.

Ibram X. Kendi: The American nightmare

DiAngelo has spent a very long time conducting diversity seminars in which whites, exposed to her catechism, regularly tell her—many while crying, yelling, or storming toward the exit—that she's insulting them and being reductionist. Yet none of this seems to have led her to look inward. Rather, she sees herself as the bearer of an exalted wisdom that these objectors fail to perceive, blinded by their inner racism. DiAngelo is less a coach than a proselytizer.

When writers who are this sure of their convictions turn out to make a compelling case, it is genuinely exciting. This is sadly not one of those times, even

though white guilt and politesse have apparently distracted many readers from the book's numerous obvious flaws.

For one, DiAngelo's book is replete with claims that are either plain wrong or bizarrely disconnected from reality. Exactly who comes away from the saga of Jackie Robinson thinking he was the first Black baseball player good enough to compete with whites? "Imagine if instead the story," DiAngelo writes, "went something like this: 'Jackie Robinson, the first black man whites allowed to play major-league baseball.'" But no one need imagine this scenario, as others have pointed out, because it is something every baseball fan already knows. Later in the book, DiAngelo insinuates that, when white women cry upon being called racists, Black people are reminded of white women crying as they lied about being raped by Black men eons ago. But how would she know? Where is the evidence for this presumptuous claim?

An especially weird passage is where DiAngelo breezily decries the American higher-education system, in which, she says, no one ever talks about racism. "I can get through graduate school without ever discussing racism," she writes. "I can graduate from law school without ever discussing racism. I can get through a teacher-education program without ever discussing racism." I am mystified that DiAngelo thinks this laughably antique depiction reflects any period after roughly 1985. For example, an education-school curriculum neglecting racism in our times would be about as common as a home unwired for electricity.

John McWhorter: The dictionary definition of *racism* has to change

DiAngelo's depiction of white psychology shape-shifts according to what her dogma requires. On the one hand, she argues in Chapter 1 that white people do not see themselves in racial terms; therefore, they must be taught by experts like her of their whiteness. But for individuals who harbor so little sense of themselves as a group, the white people whom DiAngelo describes are oddly tribalist when it suits her narrative. "White solidarity," she writes in Chapter 4, "requires both silence about anything that exposes the advantages of the white population and tacit agreement to remain racially united in the protection of white supremacy." But if these people don't even know whiteness is a category, just what are they now suddenly defending?

DIANGELO ALSO WRITES as if certain shibboleths of the Black left—for instance, that all disparities between white and Black people are due to racism of some kind—represent the incontestable truth. This ideological bias is hardly unique to DiAngelo, and a reader could look past it, along with the other lapses in argumentation I have noted, if she offered some kind of higher wisdom. The problem is that *White Fragility* is the prayer book for what can only be described as a cult.

We must consider what is required to pass muster as a non-fragile white person. Refer to a “bad neighborhood,” and you’re using code for *Black*; call it a “Black neighborhood,” and you’re a racist; by DiAngelo’s logic, you are not to describe such neighborhoods at all, even in your own head. You must not ask Black people about their experiences and feelings, because it isn’t their responsibility to educate you. Instead, you must consult books and websites. Never mind that upon doing this you will be accused of holding actual Black people at a remove, reading the wrong sources, or drawing the wrong lessons from them. You must never cry in Black people’s presence as you explore racism, not even in sympathy, because then all the attention goes to you instead of Black people. If you object to any of the “feedback” that DiAngelo offers you about your racism, you are engaging in a type of bullying “whose function is to obscure racism, protect white dominance, and regain white equilibrium.”

That is a pretty strong charge to make against people who, according to DiAngelo, don’t even conceive of their own whiteness. But if you are white, make no mistake: You will never succeed in the “work” she demands of you. It is lifelong, and you will die a racist just as you will die a sinner.

Remember also that you are not to express yourself except to say *Amen*. Namely, thou shalt not utter:

I know people of color.

I marched in the sixties.

You are judging me.

You don’t know me.

You are generalizing.

I disagree.

The real oppression is class.

I just said one little innocent thing.

Some people find offense where there is none.

You hurt my feelings.

I can't say anything right.

This is an abridgment of a list DiAngelo offers in Chapter 9; its result is to silence people. Whites aren't even allowed to say, "I don't feel safe." Only Black people can say that. If you are white, you are solely to listen as DiAngelo tars you as morally stained. "Now breathe," she counsels to keep you relaxed as you undergo this. She does stress that she is not dealing with a good/bad dichotomy and that your inner racist does not make you a bad person. But with racism limned as such a gruesome spiritual pollution, harbored by individuals moreover entrapped in a society within which they exert racism merely by getting out of bed, the issue of gray zones seems beside the point. By the end, DiAngelo has white Americans muzzled, straitjacketed, tied down, and chloroformed for good measure—but for what?

AND HEREIN IS the real problem with *White Fragility*. DiAngelo does not see fit to address why all of this agonizing soul-searching is necessary to forging change in society. One might ask just how a people can be poised for making change when they have been taught that pretty much anything they say or think is racist and thus antithetical to the good. What end does all this self-mortification serve? Impatient with such questions, DiAngelo insists that "wanting to jump over the hard, personal work and get to 'solutions'" is a "foundation of white fragility." In other words, for DiAngelo, the whole point is the suffering. And note the scare quotes around *solutions*, as if wanting such a thing were somehow ridiculous.

A corollary question is why Black people need to be treated the way DiAngelo assumes we do. The very assumption is deeply condescending to all proud Black people. In my life, racism has affected me now and then at the margins, in very occasional social ways, but has had no effect on my access to societal resources; if anything, it has made them more available to me than they would have been otherwise. Nor should anyone dismiss me as a *rara avis*. Being middle class, upwardly mobile, and Black has been quite common during my existence since the mid-1960s, and to deny this is to assert that affirmative action for Black people did not work.

In 2020—as opposed to 1920—I neither need nor want anyone to muse on how whiteness privileges them over me. Nor do I need wider society to undergo teachings in how to be exquisitely sensitive about my feelings. I see no connection between DiAngelo’s brand of reeducation and vigorous, constructive activism in the real world on issues of import to the Black community. And I cannot imagine that any Black readers could willingly submit themselves to DiAngelo’s ideas while considering themselves adults of ordinary self-regard and strength. Few books about race have more openly infantilized Black people than this supposedly authoritative tome.

Or simply dehumanized us. DiAngelo preaches that Black History Month errs in that it “takes whites out of the equation”—which means that it doesn’t focus enough on racism. Claims like this get a rise out of a certain kind of room, but apparently DiAngelo wants Black History Month to consist of glum recitations of white perfidy. This would surely help assuage DiAngelo’s sense of complicity in our problems, but does she consider what a slog this gloomy, knit-browed Festivus of a holiday would be for actual Black people? Too much of *White Fragility* has the problem of elevating rhetorical texture over common sense.

White Fragility is, in the end, a book about how to make certain educated white readers feel better about themselves. DiAngelo’s outlook rests upon a depiction of Black people as endlessly delicate poster children within this self-gratifying fantasy about how white America needs to think—or, better, stop thinking. Her answer to white fragility, in other words, entails an elaborate and pitilessly dehumanizing condescension toward Black people. The sad truth is that anyone falling under the sway of this blinkered, self-satisfied, punitive stunt of a primer has been taught, by a well-intentioned but tragically misguided pastor, how to be racist in a whole new way.

[John McWhorter](#) is a contributing writer at *The Atlantic*. He teaches linguistics at Columbia University, hosts the podcast [Lexicon Valley](#), and is the author of the upcoming [Nine Nasty Words: English in the Gutter Then, Now and Always](#).

Reparations Whats the Best Way to Give Reparations?

<https://medium.com/s/story/whats-the-best-way-to-give-reparations-a52e4c4d5b2c>

Democrats are finally grappling with the country's ugly racial history



[Dwyer Gunn](#)

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Apr 23

Photo: Scott Olson/Getty

In 2014, Ta-Nehisi Coates published a historic [essay in *The Atlantic*](#) making, as the headline of the piece suggests, the case for reparations. Coates was clear in his conviction that reparations have not been paid to African Americans because of a function of the country's lingering racism—a bigotry that was often masked in claims of impracticality. “Broach the topic of reparations today,” Coates wrote, “and a barrage of questions inevitably follows: Who will be paid? How much will they be paid? Who will pay?”

Coates' piece, which went on to win the [George Polk Award](#) for commentary, acted as a cultural catalyst, spurring rigorous debate around the subject. That discussion has finally crossed over into the mainstream political realm. Earlier this month, Senator Cory Booker, one of the Democratic party's presidential hopefuls, introduced a companion bill to H.R. 40 on the Senate floor that calls for a commission to research and create reparation proposals. The legislation has earned the support of most other Democratic candidates in the 2020 field. Meanwhile, Kamala Harris, Elizabeth Warren, and Julián Castro have all voiced their [outright support for reparations](#). (That's not to say reparations are a widely accepted proposition: According to a [2018 poll](#) from the left-leaning Data for Progress, just 26% of Americans supported some form of compensation for the descendants of slaves.)

An actual reparations program is still a long way off. Even if Democrats were to win the White House, hold the House, and take back the Senate in

2020, Booker's bill proposes only a study on the topic; an actual program would require further, no doubt highly controversial, legislation. But pretend for a moment that Booker's bill passes and reparations become a subject of government-sanctioned study: What could—and should—such a program look like?

Before we can evaluate potential models for reparations, we need to establish the goals of such a policy. [William “Sandy” Darity](#), a professor of Public Policy at Duke University and one of the foremost experts on reparations, argues that a comprehensive reparations program must include [three elements](#): acknowledgement, restitution, and closure.

“The commission must establish an accurate memory of the pattern of racial injustice dating from slavery,” Darity says. “The historical effects have had a cumulative consequence, and that really needs to be part of our national understanding.”

For many reparations advocates, direct financial compensation still needs to be central to any package.

Given that so many [modern companies](#) have benefited financially from the country's ugly racial history, any sort of national reckoning should extend to the private sector as well. “In the legal world, we talk about unjust enrichment: to what degree was your current level of wealth unjustly gained,” says Mehrsa Bardaran, a law professor at the University of Georgia and the author of [The Color of Money: Black Banks and the Racial Wealth Gap](#). “Now, companies can hide behind the argument that it was legal at the time, but we can still measure, for example, how much Coke made from convict leasing, or how much SunTrust made from mortgages that were redlined.”

The researchers I spoke with all agree that an effective reparations program must target the economic disparity that is perhaps the most representative of the collective damage inflicted upon black Americans: the racial wealth gap.

“The racial wealth gap is an easy way to quantify the economic cost because it factors in employment discrimination, housing discrimination, and a lack of access to labor protections — all of those things that target our pocketbooks,” says Angela Hanks, the director of the Groundwork Collaborative, a progressive nongovernmental organization. “If you’re trying to get to a dollar amount, it’s the best metric.”

In the past, reparations have usually taken the form of government-issued payments to marginalized communities. In 1988, for example, President Ronald Reagan signed the Civil Liberties Act, [which provided](#) financial compensation and a formal apology to Japanese Americans who were forced into internment camps during World War II. In 2013, the state of North Carolina [established](#) a reparations fund for victims of its forced sterilization program.

But policy experts believe that, in this case, a direct financial payout can’t be the sole solution; any sort of program needs to be multifaceted in its approach. “The damage was done on all fronts, so you’ve got to tackle housing, you have to build wealth in these communities,” says Bardaran. “Look at the New Deal as an example: It restructured the economy on all fronts.”

To that end, an [influential paper](#), published in 2005, might offer a path forward. In their research, political scientists Darity and Daria Frank proposed offering reparations through a trust fund for asset-building ventures such as homes and businesses, in-kind reparations in the form of scholarships, health insurance, or financial vouchers. Other promising ideas have sprung up since then. Just this month, [a report](#) released by the

Institute for Policy Studies includes a number of proposals meant to close the racial wealth gap. Among them: guaranteed employment, an increase to the minimum wage, Medicare-for-All, and baby bonds (that is, savings accounts issued to all newborns that would accrue tens of thousands of dollars).

Yet, for many reparations advocates, direct financial compensation still needs to be central to any package.

“What is there about the recognition of a justice claim among black Americans that leads people to complain about what folks will do with the money?”

Jennifer Epps-Addison, co-director of the Center for Popular Democracy, a progressive grassroots organizing network, argues that reparations proposals that don’t include direct financial compensation are both paternalistic and misunderstand the concept of restitution in the American legal system.

“Their ability to decide how they want to invest in their lives and be repaid for this harm shouldn’t rest in a body that doesn’t represent their community,” she says.

Still, direct payments are likely to be particularly controversial: Even politicians who have expressed support for reparations have [dodged](#) or [declined to give details](#) about whether their support extends to direct financial compensation. It’s not a stretch to suggest that that hesitation is, in some cases, a direct result of racist thinking — namely, that black Americans, unlike, say, Japanese Americans, can’t be trusted to spend their restitution wisely. “What is there about the recognition of a justice claim among black Americans that leads people to complain about what folks will do with the money when they don’t complain it about in other cases of reparations?” Darity asks. “Nobody asked the Japanese Americans what they were going to do with their \$20,000.”

A sizable body of research, however, demonstrates that, for black Americans, a career, an education, even a decent income, is no guarantee

of wealth. A [2018 report](#) found that the median net worth of black households with a college degree (\$70,219) was less than the median net worth of white households in which the head of household had not even completed high school (\$82,968). Black Americans also face higher unemployment rates at every education level.

“What I’ve learned from studying this is that, with education and job training, there’s not a silver bullet or an equalizer,” says Hanks, the workforce policy expert. “There are benefits to training and higher education, but these things don’t close income gaps. They don’t close employment gaps, and they don’t close the wealth gap.”

Whatever the case may be, one thing’s for sure: We’ll never know if we don’t try.

218 claps



WRITTEN BY
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The Case for Reparations by Ta-Nehisi Coates

Two hundred fifty years of slavery. Ninety years of Jim Crow. Sixty years of separate but equal. Thirty-five years of racist housing policy. Until we reckon with our compounding moral debts, America will never be whole.



Carlos Javier Ortiz

Story by Ta-Nehisi Coates

JUNE 2014 ISSUE

Editor's Note: We've gathered dozens of the most important pieces from our archives on race and racism in America. Find the collection [here](#).

And if thy brother, a Hebrew man, or a Hebrew woman, be sold unto thee, and serve thee six years; then in the seventh year thou shalt let him go free from thee. And when thou sendest him out free from thee, thou shalt not let him go away empty: thou shalt furnish him liberally out of thy flock, and out of thy floor, and out of thy winepress: of that wherewith the LORD thy God hath blessed thee thou shalt give unto him. And thou shalt remember that thou wast a bondman in the land of Egypt, and the LORD thy God redeemed thee: therefore I command thee this thing today.

— DEUTERONOMY 15: 12–15

Besides the crime which consists in violating the law, and varying from the right rule of reason, whereby a man so far becomes degenerate, and declares himself to quit the principles of human nature, and to be a noxious creature, there is commonly injury done to some person or other, and some other man receives damage by his transgression: in which case he who hath received any damage,

has, besides the right of punishment common to him with other men, a particular right to seek reparation.

—JOHN LOCKE, “SECOND TREATISE”

By our unpaid labor and suffering, we have earned the right to the soil, many times over and over, and now we are determined to have it.

— ANONYMOUS, 1861

Listen to the audio version of this article: Feature stories, read aloud: [download the Audm app for your iPhone.](#)

I. “So That’s Just One Of My Losses”

CLYDE ROSS was born in 1923, the seventh of 13 children, near Clarksdale, Mississippi, the home of the blues. Ross’s parents owned and farmed a 40-acre tract of land, flush with cows, hogs, and mules. Ross’s mother would drive to Clarksdale to do her shopping in a horse and buggy, in which she invested all the pride one might place in a Cadillac. The family owned another horse, with a red coat, which they gave to Clyde. The Ross family wanted for little, save that which all black families in the Deep South then desperately desired—the protection of the law.

Clyde Ross, photographed in November 2013 in his home in the North Lawndale neighborhood of Chicago, where he has lived for more than 50 years. When he first tried to get a legitimate mortgage, he was denied; mortgages were effectively not available to black people. (Carlos Javier Ortiz)

In the 1920s, Jim Crow Mississippi was, in all facets of society, a kleptocracy. The majority of the people in the state were perpetually robbed of the vote—a hijacking engineered through the trickery of the poll tax and the muscle of the lynch mob. Between 1882 and 1968, more black people were lynched in Mississippi than in any other state. “You and I know what’s the best way to keep the nigger from voting,” blustered Theodore Bilbo, a Mississippi senator and a proud Klansman. “You do it the night before the election.”

The state's regime partnered robbery of the franchise with robbery of the purse. Many of Mississippi's black farmers lived in debt peonage, under the sway of cotton kings who were at once their landlords, their employers, and their primary merchants. Tools and necessities were advanced against the return on the crop, which was determined by the employer. When farmers were deemed to be in debt—and they often were—the negative balance was then carried over to the next season. A man or woman who protested this arrangement did so at the risk of grave injury or death. Refusing to work meant arrest under vagrancy laws and forced labor under the state's penal system.

Well into the 20th century, black people spoke of their flight from Mississippi in much the same manner as their runagate ancestors had. In her 2010 book, *The Warmth of Other Suns*, Isabel Wilkerson tells the story of Eddie Earvin, a spinach picker who fled Mississippi in 1963, after being made to work at gunpoint. “You didn’t talk about it or tell nobody,” Earvin said. “You had to sneak away.”

“Some of the land taken from black families has become a country club in Virginia,” the AP reported.

When Clyde Ross was still a child, Mississippi authorities claimed his father owed \$3,000 in back taxes. The elder Ross could not read. He did not have a lawyer. He did not know anyone at the local courthouse. He could not expect the police to be impartial. Effectively, the Ross family had no way to contest the claim and no protection under the law. The authorities seized the land. They seized the buggy. They took the cows, hogs, and mules. And so for the upkeep of separate but equal, the entire Ross family was reduced to sharecropping.

This was hardly unusual. In 2001, the Associated Press published a three-part investigation into the theft of black-owned land stretching back to the antebellum period. The series documented some 406 victims and 24,000 acres of land valued at tens of millions of dollars. The land was taken through means ranging from legal chicanery to terrorism. “Some of the land taken from black families has become a country club in Virginia,” the AP reported, as well as “oil fields in Mississippi” and “a baseball spring training facility in Florida.”



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Clyde Ross was a smart child. His teacher thought he should attend a more challenging school. There was very little support for educating black people in Mississippi. But Julius Rosenwald, a part owner of Sears, Roebuck, had begun an ambitious effort to build schools for black children throughout the South. Ross's teacher believed he should attend the local Rosenwald school. It was too far for Ross to walk and get back in time to work in the fields. Local white children had a school bus. Clyde Ross did not, and thus lost the chance to better his education.

Then, when Ross was 10 years old, a group of white men demanded his only childhood possession—the horse with the red coat. “You can’t have this horse. We want it,” one of the white men said. They gave Ross’s father \$17.

“I did everything for that horse,” Ross told me. “Everything. And they took him. Put him on the racetrack. I never did know what happened to him after that, but I know they didn’t bring him back. So that’s just one of my losses.”

Sharecropper boys in 1936 (Carly Mydans/Library of Congress)

The losses mounted. As sharecroppers, the Ross family saw their wages treated as the landlord’s slush fund. Landowners were supposed to split the profits from the cotton fields with sharecroppers. But bales would often disappear during the count, or the

split might be altered on a whim. If cotton was selling for 50 cents a pound, the Ross family might get 15 cents, or only five. One year Ross's mother promised to buy him a \$7 suit for a summer program at their church. She ordered the suit by mail. But that year Ross's family was paid only five cents a pound for cotton. The mailman arrived with the suit. The Rosses could not pay. The suit was sent back. Clyde Ross did not go to the church program.

REPORTER'S NOTEBOOK

Elegant Racism

"If you sought to advantage one group of Americans and disadvantage another, you could scarcely choose a more graceful method than housing discrimination."

Read more

It was in these early years that Ross began to understand himself as an American—he did not live under the blind decree of justice, but under the heel of a regime that elevated armed robbery to a governing principle. He thought about fighting. "Just be quiet," his father told him. "Because they'll come and kill us all."

Clyde Ross grew. He was drafted into the Army. The draft officials offered him an exemption if he stayed home and worked. He preferred to take his chances with war. He was stationed in California. He found that he could go into stores without being bothered. He could walk the streets without being harassed. He could go into a restaurant and receive service.

Ross was shipped off to Guam. He fought in World War II to save the world from tyranny. But when he returned to Clarksdale, he found that tyranny had followed him home. This was 1947, eight years before Mississippi lynched Emmett Till and tossed his broken body into the Tallahatchie River. The Great Migration, a mass exodus of 6 million African Americans that spanned most of the 20th century, was now in its second wave. The black pilgrims did not journey north simply seeking better wages and work, or bright lights and big adventures. They were fleeing the acquisitive warlords of the South. They were seeking the protection of the law.

Clyde Ross was among them. He came to Chicago in 1947 and took a job as a taster at Campbell's Soup. He made a stable wage. He married. He had children. His paycheck was his own. No Klansmen stripped him of the vote. When he walked down the street, he did not have to move because a white man was walking past. He did not

have to take off his hat or avert his gaze. His journey from peonage to full citizenship seemed near-complete. Only one item was missing—a home, that final badge of entry into the sacred order of the American middle class of the Eisenhower years.

In 1961, Ross and his wife bought a house in North Lawndale, a bustling community on Chicago's West Side. North Lawndale had long been a predominantly Jewish neighborhood, but a handful of middle-class African Americans had lived there starting in the '40s. The community was anchored by the sprawling Sears, Roebuck headquarters. North Lawndale's Jewish People's Institute actively encouraged blacks to move into the neighborhood, seeking to make it a "pilot community for interracial living." In the battle for integration then being fought around the country, North Lawndale seemed to offer promising terrain. But out in the tall grass, highwaymen, nefarious as any Clarksdale kleptocrat, were lying in wait.

From the 1930s through the 1960s, black people across the country were largely cut out of the legitimate home-mortgage market.

Three months after Clyde Ross moved into his house, the boiler blew out. This would normally be a homeowner's responsibility, but in fact, Ross was not really a homeowner. His payments were made to the seller, not the bank. And Ross had not signed a normal mortgage. He'd bought "on contract": a predatory agreement that combined all the responsibilities of homeownership with all the disadvantages of renting—while offering the benefits of neither. Ross had bought his house for \$27,500. The seller, not the previous homeowner but a new kind of middleman, had bought it for only \$12,000 six months before selling it to Ross. In a contract sale, the seller kept the deed until the contract was paid in full—and, unlike with a normal mortgage, Ross would acquire no equity in the meantime. If he missed a single payment, he would immediately forfeit his \$1,000 down payment, all his monthly payments, and the property itself.

The men who peddled contracts in North Lawndale would sell homes at inflated prices and then evict families who could not pay—taking their down payment and their monthly installments as profit. Then they'd bring in another black family, rinse, and repeat. "He loads them up with payments they can't meet," an office secretary told *The Chicago Daily News* of her boss, the speculator Lou Fushanis, in 1963. "Then he takes the property away from them. He's sold some of the buildings three or four times."

Ross had tried to get a legitimate mortgage in another neighborhood, but was told by a loan officer that there was no financing available. The truth was that there was no financing for people like Clyde Ross. From the 1930s through the 1960s, black people across the country were largely cut out of the legitimate home-mortgage market through means both legal and extralegal. Chicago whites employed every measure, from “restrictive covenants” to bombings, to keep their neighborhoods segregated.

Their efforts were buttressed by the federal government. In 1934, Congress created the Federal Housing Administration. The FHA insured private mortgages, causing a drop in interest rates and a decline in the size of the down payment required to buy a house. But an insured mortgage was not a possibility for Clyde Ross. The FHA had adopted a system of maps that rated neighborhoods according to their perceived stability. On the maps, green areas, rated “A,” indicated “in demand” neighborhoods that, as one appraiser put it, lacked “a single foreigner or Negro.” These neighborhoods were considered excellent prospects for insurance. Neighborhoods where black people lived were rated “D” and were usually considered ineligible for FHA backing. They were colored in red. Neither the percentage of black people living there nor their social class mattered. Black people were viewed as a contagion. Redlining went beyond FHA-backed loans and spread to the entire mortgage industry, which was already rife with racism, excluding black people from most legitimate means of obtaining a mortgage.

Explore Redlining in Chicago

A 1939 Home Owners’ Loan Corporation “Residential Security Map” of Chicago shows discrimination against low-income and minority neighborhoods. The residents of the areas marked in red (representing “hazardous” real-estate markets) were denied FHA-backed mortgages. (Map development by Frankie Dintino)

“A government offering such bounty to builders and lenders could have required compliance with a nondiscrimination policy,” Charles Abrams, the urban-studies expert who helped create the New York City Housing Authority, wrote in 1955. “Instead, the FHA adopted a racial policy that could well have been culled from the Nuremberg laws.”

The devastating effects are cogently outlined by Melvin L. Oliver and Thomas M. Shapiro in their 1995 book, *Black Wealth/White Wealth*:

Locked out of the greatest mass-based opportunity for wealth accumulation in American history, African Americans who desired and were able to afford home ownership found themselves consigned to central-city communities where their investments were affected by the “self-fulfilling prophecies” of the FHA appraisers: cut off from sources of new investment[,] their homes and communities deteriorated and lost value in comparison to those homes and communities that FHA appraisers deemed desirable.

In Chicago and across the country, whites looking to achieve the American dream could rely on a legitimate credit system backed by the government. Blacks were herded into the sights of unscrupulous lenders who took them for money and for sport. “It was like people who like to go out and shoot lions in Africa. It was the same thrill,” a housing attorney told the historian Beryl Satter in her 2009 book, *Family Properties*. “The thrill of the chase and the kill.”

REPORTER’S NOTEBOOK

The American Case Against a Black Middle Class

“When a black family in Chicago saves up enough to move out of the crowded slums into Cicero, the neighborhood riots.”

[Read more](#)

The kill was profitable. At the time of his death, Lou Fushanis owned more than 600 properties, many of them in North Lawndale, and his estate was estimated to be worth \$3 million. He’d made much of this money by exploiting the frustrated hopes of black migrants like Clyde Ross. During this period, according to one estimate, 85 percent of all black home buyers who bought in Chicago bought on contract. “If anybody who is well established in this business in Chicago doesn’t earn \$100,000 a year,” a contract seller told *The Saturday Evening Post* in 1962, “he is loafing.”

Contract sellers became rich. North Lawndale became a ghetto.

Clyde Ross still lives there. He still owns his home. He is 91, and the emblems of survival are all around him—awards for service in his community, pictures of his children in cap and gown. But when I asked him about his home in North Lawndale, I heard only anarchy.

“We were ashamed. We did not want anyone to know that we were that ignorant,” Ross told me. He was sitting at his dining-room table. His glasses were as thick as his

Clarksdale drawl. “I’d come out of Mississippi where there was one mess, and come up here and got in another mess. So how dumb am I? I didn’t want anyone to know how dumb I was.

“When I found myself caught up in it, I said, ‘How? I just left this mess. I just left no laws. And no regard. And then I come here and get cheated wide open.’ I would probably want to do some harm to some people, you know, if I had been violent like some of us. I thought, ‘Man, I got caught up in this stuff. I can’t even take care of my kids.’ I didn’t have enough for my kids. You could fall through the cracks easy fighting these white people. And no law.”

Blacks were herded into the sights of unscrupulous lenders who took them for money and for sport.

But fight Clyde Ross did. In 1968 he joined the newly formed Contract Buyers League—a collection of black homeowners on Chicago’s South and West Sides, all of whom had been locked into the same system of predation. There was Howell Collins, whose contract called for him to pay \$25,500 for a house that a speculator had bought for \$14,500. There was Ruth Wells, who’d managed to pay out half her contract, expecting a mortgage, only to suddenly see an insurance bill materialize out of thin air—a requirement the seller had added without Wells’s knowledge. Contract sellers used every tool at their disposal to pilfer from their clients. They scared white residents into selling low. They lied about properties’ compliance with building codes, then left the buyer responsible when city inspectors arrived. They presented themselves as real-estate brokers, when in fact they were the owners. They guided their clients to lawyers who were in on the scheme.

The Contract Buyers League fought back. Members—who would eventually number more than 500—went out to the posh suburbs where the speculators lived and embarrassed them by knocking on their neighbors’ doors and informing them of the details of the contract-lending trade. They refused to pay their installments, instead holding monthly payments in an escrow account. Then they brought a suit against the contract sellers, accusing them of buying properties and reselling in such a manner “to reap from members of the Negro race large and unjust profits.”

Video: The Contract Buyers League

The story of Clyde Ross and the Contract Buyers League

In return for the “deprivations of their rights and privileges under the Thirteenth and Fourteenth Amendments,” the league demanded “prayers for relief”—payback of all moneys paid on contracts and all moneys paid for structural improvement of properties, at 6 percent interest minus a “fair, non-discriminatory” rental price for time of occupation. Moreover, the league asked the court to adjudge that the defendants had “acted willfully and maliciously and that malice is the gist of this action.”

Ross and the Contract Buyers League were no longer appealing to the government simply for equality. They were no longer fleeing in hopes of a better deal elsewhere. They were charging society with a crime against their community. They wanted the crime publicly ruled as such. They wanted the crime’s executors declared to be offensive to society. And they wanted restitution for the great injury brought upon them by said offenders. In 1968, Clyde Ross and the Contract Buyers League were no longer simply seeking the protection of the law. They were seeking reparations.

II. “A Difference of Kind, Not Degree”

ACCORDING TO THE MOST-RECENT STATISTICS, North Lawndale is now on the wrong end of virtually every socioeconomic indicator. In 1930 its population was 112,000. Today it is 36,000. The halcyon talk of “interracial living” is dead. The neighborhood is 92 percent black. Its homicide rate is 45 per 100,000—triple the rate of the city as a whole. The infant-mortality rate is 14 per 1,000—more than twice the national average. Forty-three percent of the people in North Lawndale live below the poverty line—double Chicago’s overall rate. Forty-five percent of all households are on food stamps—nearly three times the rate of the city at large. Sears, Roebuck left the neighborhood in 1987, taking 1,800 jobs with it. Kids in North Lawndale need not be confused about their prospects: Cook County’s Juvenile Temporary Detention Center sits directly adjacent to the neighborhood.

North Lawndale is an extreme portrait of the trends that ail black Chicago. Such is the magnitude of these ailments that it can be said that blacks and whites do not inhabit the same city. The average per capita income of Chicago’s white neighborhoods is

almost three times that of its black neighborhoods. When the Harvard sociologist Robert J. Sampson examined incarceration rates in Chicago in his 2012 book, *Great American City*, he found that a black neighborhood with one of the highest incarceration rates (West Garfield Park) had a rate more than 40 times as high as the white neighborhood with the highest rate (Clearing). “This is a staggering differential, even for community-level comparisons,” Sampson writes. “A difference of kind, not degree.”

Interactive Census Map

Explore race, unemployment, and vacancy rates over seven decades in Chicago. (Map design and development by Frankie Dintino)

In other words, Chicago’s impoverished black neighborhoods—characterized by high unemployment and households headed by single parents—are not simply poor; they are “ecologically distinct.” This “is not simply the same thing as low economic status,” writes Sampson. “In this pattern Chicago is not alone.”

The lives of black Americans are better than they were half a century ago. The humiliation of WHITES ONLY signs are gone. Rates of black poverty have decreased. Black teen-pregnancy rates are at record lows—and the gap between black and white teen-pregnancy rates has shrunk significantly. But such progress rests on a shaky foundation, and fault lines are everywhere. The income gap between black and white households is roughly the same today as it was in 1970. Patrick Sharkey, a sociologist at New York University, studied children born from 1955 through 1970 and found that 4 percent of whites and 62 percent of blacks across America had been raised in poor neighborhoods. A generation later, the same study showed, virtually nothing had changed. And whereas whites born into affluent neighborhoods tended to remain in affluent neighborhoods, blacks tended to fall out of them.

This is not surprising. Black families, regardless of income, are significantly less wealthy than white families. The Pew Research Center estimates that white households are worth roughly 20 times as much as black households, and that whereas only 15 percent of whites have zero or negative wealth, more than a third of blacks do. Effectively, the black family in America is working without a safety net. When financial calamity strikes—a medical emergency, divorce, job loss—the fall is precipitous.

And just as black families of all incomes remain handicapped by a lack of wealth, so too do they remain handicapped by their restricted choice of neighborhood. Black people with upper-middle-class incomes do not generally live in upper-middle-class neighborhoods. Sharkey's research shows that black families making \$100,000 typically live in the kinds of neighborhoods inhabited by white families making \$30,000. "Blacks and whites inhabit such different neighborhoods," Sharkey writes, "that it is not possible to compare the economic outcomes of black and white children."

A national real-estate association advised not to sell to "a colored man of means who was giving his children a college education."

The implications are chilling. As a rule, poor black people do not work their way out of the ghetto—and those who do often face the horror of watching their children and grandchildren tumble back.

Even seeming evidence of progress withers under harsh light. In 2012, the Manhattan Institute cheerily noted that segregation had declined since the 1960s. And yet African Americans still remained—by far—the most segregated ethnic group in the country.

With segregation, with the isolation of the injured and the robbed, comes the concentration of disadvantage. An unsegregated America might see poverty, and all its effects, spread across the country with no particular bias toward skin color. Instead, the concentration of poverty has been paired with a concentration of melanin. The resulting conflagration has been devastating.

One thread of thinking in the African American community holds that these depressing numbers partially stem from cultural pathologies that can be altered through individual grit and exceptionally good behavior. (In 2011, Philadelphia Mayor Michael Nutter, responding to violence among young black males, put the blame on the family: "Too many men making too many babies they don't want to take care of, and then we end up dealing with your children." Nutter turned to those presumably fatherless babies: "Pull your pants up and buy a belt, because no one wants to see your underwear or the crack of your butt.") The thread is as old as black politics itself.

It is also wrong. The kind of trenchant racism to which black people have persistently been subjected can never be defeated by making its victims more respectable. The essence of American racism is disrespect. And in the wake of the grim numbers, we see the grim inheritance.

The Contract Buyers League's suit brought by Clyde Ross and his allies took direct aim at this inheritance. The suit was rooted in Chicago's long history of segregation, which had created two housing markets—one legitimate and backed by the government, the other lawless and patrolled by predators. The suit dragged on until 1976, when the league lost a jury trial. Securing the equal protection of the law proved hard; securing reparations proved impossible. If there were any doubts about the mood of the jury, the foreman removed them by saying, when asked about the verdict, that he hoped it would help end “the mess Earl Warren made with *Brown v. Board of Education* and all that nonsense.”

An unsegregated America might see poverty spread across the country, with no particular bias toward skin color.

The Supreme Court seems to share that sentiment. The past two decades have witnessed a rollback of the progressive legislation of the 1960s. Liberals have found themselves on the defensive. In 2008, when Barack Obama was a candidate for president, he was asked whether his daughters—Malia and Sasha—should benefit from affirmative action. He answered in the negative.

The exchange rested upon an erroneous comparison of the average American white family and the exceptional first family. In the contest of upward mobility, Barack and Michelle Obama have won. But they've won by being twice as good—and enduring twice as much. Malia and Sasha Obama enjoy privileges beyond the average white child's dreams. But that comparison is incomplete. The more telling question is how they compare with Jenna and Barbara Bush—the products of many generations of privilege, not just one. Whatever the Obama children achieve, it will be evidence of their family's singular perseverance, not of broad equality.

III. “We Inherit Our Ample Patrimony”

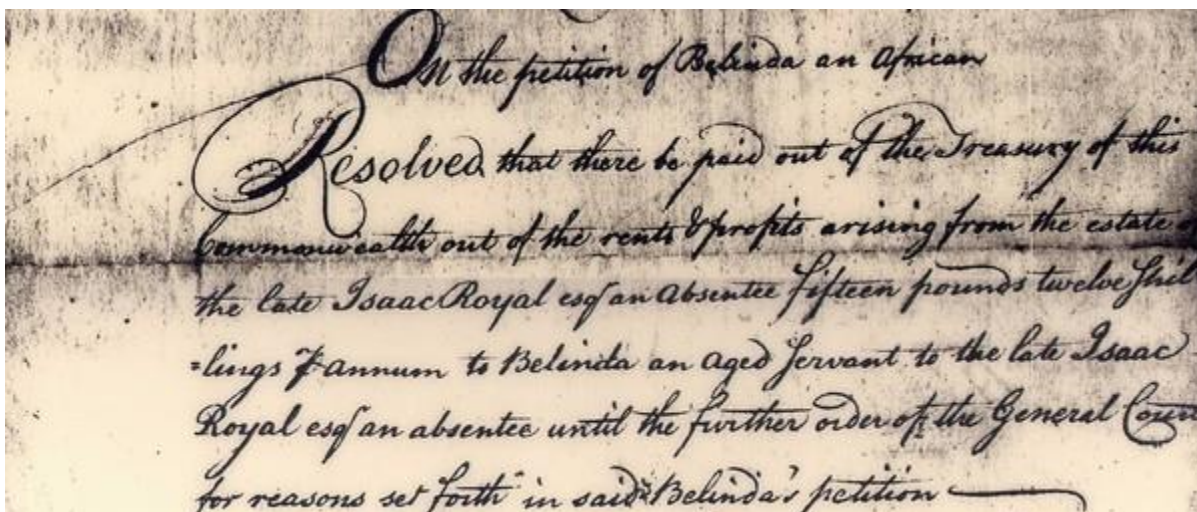
IN 1783, the freedwoman Belinda Royall petitioned the commonwealth of Massachusetts for reparations. Belinda had been born in modern-day Ghana. She was

kidnapped as a child and sold into slavery. She endured the Middle Passage and 50 years of enslavement at the hands of Isaac Royall and his son. But the junior Royall, a British loyalist, fled the country during the Revolution. Belinda, now free after half a century of labor, beseeched the nascent Massachusetts legislature:

The face of your Petitioner, is now marked with the furrows of time, and her frame bending under the oppression of years, while she, by the Laws of the Land, is denied the employment of one morsel of that immense wealth, apart whereof hath been accumulated by her own industry, and the whole augmented by her servitude.

WHEREFORE, casting herself at your feet if your honours, as to a body of men, formed for the extirpation of vassalage, for the reward of Virtue, and the just return of honest industry—she prays, that such allowance may be made her out of the Estate of Colonel Royall, as will prevent her, and her more infirm daughter, from misery in the greatest extreme, and scatter comfort over the short and downward path of their lives.

Belinda Royall was granted a pension of 15 pounds and 12 shillings, to be paid out of the estate of Isaac Royall—one of the earliest successful attempts to petition for reparations. At the time, black people in America had endured more than 150 years of enslavement, and the idea that they might be owed something in return was, if not the national consensus, at least not outrageous.



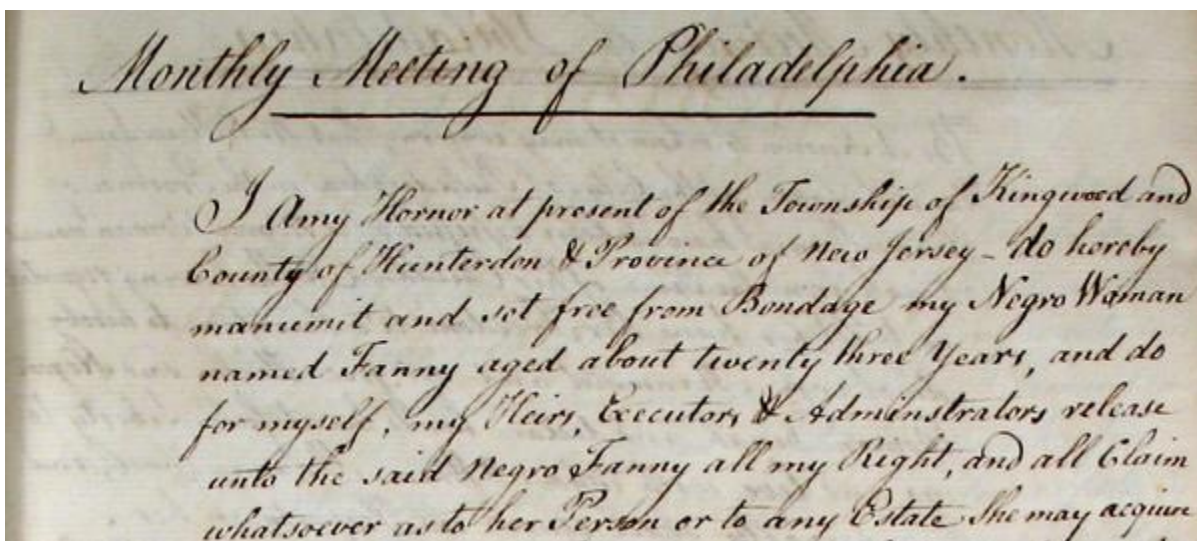
On the petition of Belinda an African
Resolved that there be paid out of the Treasury of this
Commonwealth out of the rents & profits arising from the estate of
the late Isaac Royall esq an Absentee Fifteen pounds twelve shill
& lings & annuum to Belinda an aged servant to the late Isaac
Royall esq an absentee until the further order of the General Court
for reasons set forth in said Belinda's petition

Click the image above to view the full document.

“A heavy account lies against us as a civil society for oppressions committed against people who did not injure us,” wrote the Quaker John Woolman in 1769, “and that if

the particular case of many individuals were fairly stated, it would appear that there was considerable due to them.”

As the historian Roy E. Finkenbine has documented, at the dawn of this country, black reparations were actively considered and often effected. Quakers in New York, New England, and Baltimore went so far as to make “membership contingent upon compensating one’s former slaves.” In 1782, the Quaker Robert Pleasants emancipated his 78 slaves, granted them 350 acres, and later built a school on their property and provided for their education. “The doing of this justice to the injured Africans,” wrote Pleasants, “would be an acceptable offering to him who ‘Rules in the kingdom of men.’”



Click the image above to view the full document.

Edward Coles, a protégé of Thomas Jefferson who became a slaveholder through inheritance, took many of his slaves north and granted them a plot of land in Illinois. John Randolph, a cousin of Jefferson’s, willed that all his slaves be emancipated upon his death, and that all those older than 40 be given 10 acres of land. “I give and bequeath to all my slaves their freedom,” Randolph wrote, “heartily regretting that I have been the owner of one.”

In his book *Forever Free*, Eric Foner recounts the story of a disgruntled planter reprimanding a freedman loafing on the job:

Planter: “You lazy nigger, I am losing a whole day’s labor by you.”

Freedman: “Massa, how many days’ labor have I lost by you?”

In the 20th century, the cause of reparations was taken up by a diverse cast that included the Confederate veteran Walter R. Vaughan, who believed that reparations would be a stimulus for the South; the black activist Callie House; black-nationalist leaders like “Queen Mother” Audley Moore; and the civil-rights activist James Forman. The movement coalesced in 1987 under an umbrella organization called the National Coalition of Blacks for Reparations in America (N’COBRA). The NAACP endorsed reparations in 1993. Charles J. Ogletree Jr., a professor at Harvard Law School, has pursued reparations claims in court.

But while the people advocating reparations have changed over time, the response from the country has remained virtually the same. “They have been taught to labor,” the *Chicago Tribune* editorialized in 1891. “They have been taught Christian civilization, and to speak the noble English language instead of some African gibberish. The account is square with the ex-slaves.”

Not exactly. Having been enslaved for 250 years, black people were not left to their own devices. They were terrorized. In the Deep South, a second slavery ruled. In the North, legislatures, mayors, civic associations, banks, and citizens all colluded to pin black people into ghettos, where they were overcrowded, overcharged, and undereducated. Businesses discriminated against them, awarding them the worst jobs and the worst wages. Police brutalized them in the streets. And the notion that black lives, black bodies, and black wealth were rightful targets remained deeply rooted in the broader society. Now we have half-stepped away from our long centuries of despoilment, promising, “Never again.” But still we are haunted. It is as though we have run up a credit-card bill and, having pledged to charge no more, remain befuddled that the balance does not disappear. The effects of that balance, interest accruing daily, are all around us.

Broach the topic of reparations today and a barrage of questions inevitably follows: Who will be paid? How much will they be paid? Who will pay? But if the practicalities, not the justice, of reparations are the true sticking point, there has for some time been the beginnings of a solution. For the past 25 years, Congressman John Conyers Jr., who represents the Detroit area, has marked every session of Congress by introducing a bill calling for a congressional study of slavery and its lingering effects as well as recommendations for “appropriate remedies.”

A country curious about how reparations might actually work has an easy solution in Conyers's bill, now called HR 40, the Commission to Study Reparation Proposals for African Americans Act. We would support this bill, submit the question to study, and then assess the possible solutions. But we are not interested.

REPORTER'S NOTEBOOK

What We Should Be Asking About Reparations

"Any contemplation of compensated emancipation must grapple with how several counties, and some states in the South, would react to finding themselves suddenly outnumbered by free black people."

[Read more](#)

"It's because it's black folks making the claim," Nkechi Taifa, who helped found N'COBRA, says. "People who talk about reparations are considered left lunatics. But all we are talking about is studying [reparations]. As John Conyers has said, we study everything. We study the water, the air. We can't even study the issue? This bill does not authorize one red cent to anyone."

That HR 40 has never—under either Democrats or Republicans—made it to the House floor suggests our concerns are rooted not in the impracticality of reparations but in something more existential. If we conclude that the conditions in North Lawndale and black America are not inexplicable but are instead precisely what you'd expect of a community that for centuries has lived in America's crosshairs, then what are we to make of the world's oldest democracy?

One cannot escape the question by hand-waving at the past, disavowing the acts of one's ancestors, nor by citing a recent date of ancestral immigration. The last slaveholder has been dead for a very long time. The last soldier to endure Valley Forge has been dead much longer. To proudly claim the veteran and disown the slaveholder is patriotism à la carte. A nation outlives its generations. We were not there when Washington crossed the Delaware, but Emanuel Gottlieb Leutze's rendering has meaning to us. We were not there when Woodrow Wilson took us into World War I, but we are still paying out the pensions. If Thomas Jefferson's genius matters, then so does his taking of Sally Hemings's body. If George Washington crossing the Delaware matters, so must his ruthless pursuit of the runagate Oney Judge.

Black families making \$100,000 typically live in the kinds of neighborhoods inhabited by white families making \$30,000.

In 1909, President William Howard Taft told the country that “intelligent” white southerners were ready to see blacks as “useful members of the community.” A week later Joseph Gordon, a black man, was lynched outside Greenwood, Mississippi. The high point of the lynching era has passed. But the memories of those robbed of their lives still live on in the lingering effects. Indeed, in America there is a strange and powerful belief that if you stab a black person 10 times, the bleeding stops and the healing begins the moment the assailant drops the knife. We believe white dominance to be a fact of the inert past, a delinquent debt that can be made to disappear if only we don’t look.

There has always been another way. “It is in vain to alledge, that *our ancestors* brought them hither, and not we,” Yale President Timothy Dwight said in 1810.

We inherit our ample patrimony with all its incumbrances; and are bound to pay the debts of our ancestors. *This* debt, particularly, we are bound to discharge: and, when the righteous Judge of the Universe comes to reckon with his servants, he will rigidly exact the payment at our hands. To give them liberty, and stop here, is to entail upon them a curse.

IV. “The Ills That Slavery Frees Us From”

AMERICA BEGINS IN BLACK PLUNDER AND WHITE DEMOCRACY, two features that are not contradictory but complementary. “The men who came together to found the independent United States, dedicated to freedom and equality, either held slaves or were willing to join hands with those who did,” the historian Edmund S. Morgan wrote. “None of them felt entirely comfortable about the fact, but neither did they feel responsible for it. Most of them had inherited both their slaves and their attachment to freedom from an earlier generation, and they knew the two were not unconnected.”

Slaves in South Carolina prepare cotton for the gin in 1862. (Timothy H. O'sullivan/Library of Congress)

When enslaved Africans, plundered of their bodies, plundered of their families, and plundered of their labor, were brought to the colony of Virginia in 1619, they did not initially endure the naked racism that would engulf their progeny. Some of them were freed. Some of them intermarried. Still others escaped with the white indentured servants who had suffered as they had. Some even rebelled together, allying under Nathaniel Bacon to torch Jamestown in 1676.

One hundred years later, the idea of slaves and poor whites joining forces would shock the senses, but in the early days of the English colonies, the two groups had much in common. English visitors to Virginia found that its masters “abuse their servantes with intollerable oppression and hard usage.” White servants were flogged, tricked into serving beyond their contracts, and traded in much the same manner as slaves.

This “hard usage” originated in a simple fact of the New World—land was boundless but cheap labor was limited. As life spans increased in the colony, the Virginia planters found in the enslaved Africans an even more efficient source of cheap labor. Whereas indentured servants were still legal subjects of the English crown and thus entitled to certain protections, African slaves entered the colonies as aliens. Exempted from the protections of the crown, they became early America’s indispensable working class—fit for maximum exploitation, capable of only minimal resistance.

For the next 250 years, American law worked to reduce black people to a class of untouchables and raise all white men to the level of citizens. In 1650, Virginia mandated that “all persons except Negroes” were to carry arms. In 1664, Maryland mandated that any Englishwoman who married a slave must live as a slave of her husband’s master. In 1705, the Virginia assembly passed a law allowing for the dismemberment of unruly slaves—but forbidding masters from whipping “a Christian white servant naked, without an order from a justice of the peace.” In that same law, the colony mandated that “all horses, cattle, and hogs, now belonging, or that hereafter shall belong to any slave” be seized and sold off by the local church, the profits used to support “the poor of the said parish.” At that time, there would have still been people alive who could remember blacks and whites joining to burn down

Jamestown only 29 years before. But at the beginning of the 18th century, two primary classes were enshrined in America.

“The two great divisions of society are not the rich and poor, but white and black,” John C. Calhoun, South Carolina’s senior senator, declared on the Senate floor in 1848. “And all the former, the poor as well as the rich, belong to the upper class, and are respected and treated as equals.”

In 1860, the majority of people living in South Carolina and Mississippi, almost half of those living in Georgia, and about one-third of all Southerners were on the wrong side of Calhoun’s line. The state with the largest number of enslaved Americans was Virginia, where in certain counties some 70 percent of all people labored in chains. Nearly one-fourth of all white Southerners owned slaves, and upon their backs the economic basis of America—and much of the Atlantic world—was erected. In the seven cotton states, one-third of all white income was derived from slavery. By 1840, cotton produced by slave labor constituted 59 percent of the country’s exports. The web of this slave society extended north to the looms of New England, and across the Atlantic to Great Britain, where it powered a great economic transformation and altered the trajectory of world history. “Whoever says Industrial Revolution,” wrote the historian Eric J. Hobsbawm, “says cotton.”



In this artistic rendering by Henry Louis Stephens, a well-known illustrator of the era, a family is in the process of being separated at a slave auction. (Library of Congress)

The wealth accorded America by slavery was not just in what the slaves pulled from the land but in the slaves themselves. “In 1860, slaves as an asset were worth more than all of America’s manufacturing, all of the railroads, all of the productive capacity of the United States put together,” the Yale historian David W. Blight has noted. “Slaves were the single largest, by far, financial asset of property in the entire American economy.” The sale of these slaves—“in whose bodies that money congealed,” writes Walter Johnson, a Harvard historian—generated even more ancillary wealth. Loans were taken out for purchase, to be repaid with interest. Insurance policies were drafted against the untimely death of a slave and the loss of potential profits. Slave sales were taxed and notarized. The vending of the black body and the sundering of the black family became an economy unto themselves, estimated to have brought in tens of millions of dollars to antebellum America. In 1860 there

were more millionaires per capita in the Mississippi Valley than anywhere else in the country.

Beneath the cold numbers lay lives divided. “I had a constant dread that Mrs. Moore, her mistress, would be in want of money and sell my dear wife,” a freedman wrote, reflecting on his time in slavery. “We constantly dreaded a final separation. Our affection for each was very strong, and this made us always apprehensive of a cruel parting.”

Forced partings were common in the antebellum South. A slave in some parts of the region stood a 30 percent chance of being sold in his or her lifetime. Twenty-five percent of interstate trades destroyed a first marriage and half of them destroyed a nuclear family.

When the wife and children of Henry Brown, a slave in Richmond, Virginia, were to be sold away, Brown searched for a white master who might buy his wife and children to keep the family together. He failed:

The next day, I stationed myself by the side of the road, along which the slaves, amounting to three hundred and fifty, were to pass. The purchaser of my wife was a Methodist minister, who was about starting for North Carolina. Pretty soon five waggon-loads of little children passed, and looking at the foremost one, what should I see but a little child, pointing its tiny hand towards me, exclaiming, “There’s my father; I knew he would come and bid me good-bye.” It was my eldest child! Soon the gang approached in which my wife was chained. I looked, and beheld her familiar face; but O, reader, that glance of agony! may God spare me ever again enduring the excruciating horror of that moment! She passed, and came near to where I stood. I seized hold of her hand, intending to bid her farewell; but words failed me; the gift of utterance had fled, and I remained speechless. I followed her for some distance, with her hand grasped in mine, as if to save her from her fate, but I could not speak, and I was obliged to turn away in silence.

In a time when telecommunications were primitive and blacks lacked freedom of movement, the parting of black families was a kind of murder. Here we find the roots of American wealth and democracy—in the for-profit destruction of the most important asset available to any people, the family. The destruction was not incidental to America’s rise; it facilitated that rise. By erecting a slave society, America created

the economic foundation for its great experiment in democracy. The labor strife that seeded Bacon's rebellion was suppressed. America's indispensable working class existed as property beyond the realm of politics, leaving white Americans free to trumpet their love of freedom and democratic values. Assessing antebellum democracy in Virginia, a visitor from England observed that the state's natives "can profess an unbounded love of liberty and of democracy in consequence of the mass of the people, who in other countries might become mobs, being there nearly altogether composed of their own Negro slaves."

V. The Quiet Plunder

THE CONSEQUENCES of 250 years of enslavement, of war upon black families and black people, were profound. Like homeownership today, slave ownership was aspirational, attracting not just those who owned slaves but those who wished to. Much as homeowners today might discuss the addition of a patio or the painting of a living room, slaveholders traded tips on the best methods for breeding workers, exacting labor, and doling out punishment. Just as a homeowner today might subscribe to a magazine like *This Old House*, slaveholders had journals such as *De Bow's Review*, which recommended the best practices for wringing profits from slaves. By the dawn of the Civil War, the enslavement of black America was thought to be so foundational to the country that those who sought to end it were branded heretics worthy of death. Imagine what would happen if a president today came out in favor of taking all American homes from their owners: the reaction might well be violent.

Click the image above to view the full document.

"This country was formed for the *white*, not for the black man," John Wilkes Booth wrote, before killing Abraham Lincoln. "And looking upon *African slavery* from the same standpoint held by those noble framers of our Constitution, I for one have ever considered *it* one of the greatest blessings (both for themselves and us) that God ever bestowed upon a favored nation."

In the aftermath of the Civil War, Radical Republicans attempted to reconstruct the country upon something resembling universal equality—but they were beaten back by a campaign of "Redemption," led by White Liners, Red Shirts, and Klansmen bent on upholding a society "formed for the *white*, not for the black man." A wave of terrorism roiled the South. In his massive history *Reconstruction*, Eric Foner recounts

incidents of black people being attacked for not removing their hats; for refusing to hand over a whiskey flask; for disobeying church procedures; for “using insolent language”; for disputing labor contracts; for refusing to be “tied like a slave.” Sometimes the attacks were intended simply to “thin out the niggers a little.”

Terrorism carried the day. Federal troops withdrew from the South in 1877. The dream of Reconstruction died. For the next century, political violence was visited upon blacks wantonly, with special treatment meted out toward black people of ambition. Black schools and churches were burned to the ground. Black voters and the political candidates who attempted to rally them were intimidated, and some were murdered. At the end of World War I, black veterans returning to their homes were assaulted for daring to wear the American uniform. The demobilization of soldiers after the war, which put white and black veterans into competition for scarce jobs, produced the Red Summer of 1919: a succession of racist pogroms against dozens of cities ranging from Longview, Texas, to Chicago to Washington, D.C. Organized white violence against blacks continued into the 1920s—in 1921 a white mob leveled Tulsa’s “Black Wall Street,” and in 1923 another one razed the black town of Rosewood, Florida—and virtually no one was punished.



A postcard dated August 3, 1920, depicts the aftermath of a lynching in Center, Texas, near the Louisiana border. According to the text on the other side, the victim was a 16-year-old boy.

The work of mobs was a rabid and violent rendition of prejudices that extended even into the upper reaches of American government. The New Deal is today remembered as a model for what progressive government should do—cast a broad social safety net that protects the poor and the afflicted while building the middle class. When progressives wish to express their disappointment with Barack Obama, they point to the accomplishments of Franklin Roosevelt. But these progressives rarely note that Roosevelt’s New Deal, much like the democracy that produced it, rested on the foundation of Jim Crow.

“The Jim Crow South,” writes Ira Katznelson, a history and political-science professor at Columbia, “was the one collaborator America’s democracy could not do without.” The marks of that collaboration are all over the New Deal. The omnibus programs passed under the Social Security Act in 1935 were crafted in such a way as to protect the southern way of life. Old-age insurance (Social Security proper) and unemployment insurance excluded farmworkers and domestics—jobs heavily occupied by blacks. When President Roosevelt signed Social Security into law in 1935, 65 percent of African Americans nationally and between 70 and 80 percent in the South were ineligible. The NAACP protested, calling the new American safety net “a sieve with holes just big enough for the majority of Negroes to fall through.”

The oft-celebrated G.I. Bill similarly failed black Americans, by mirroring the broader country’s insistence on a racist housing policy. Though ostensibly color-blind, Title III of the bill, which aimed to give veterans access to low-interest home loans, left black veterans to tangle with white officials at their local Veterans Administration as well as with the same banks that had, for years, refused to grant mortgages to blacks. The historian Kathleen J. Frydl observes in her 2009 book, *The GI Bill*, that so many blacks were disqualified from receiving Title III benefits “that it is more accurate simply to say that blacks could not use this particular title.”

In Cold War America, homeownership was seen as a means of instilling patriotism, and as a civilizing and anti-radical force. “No man who owns his own house and lot can be a Communist,” claimed William Levitt, who pioneered the modern suburb with

the development of the various Levittowns, his famous planned communities. “He has too much to do.”

But the Levittowns were, with Levitt’s willing acquiescence, segregated throughout their early years. Daisy and Bill Myers, the first black family to move into Levittown, Pennsylvania, were greeted with protests and a burning cross. A neighbor who opposed the family said that Bill Myers was “probably a nice guy, but every time I look at him I see \$2,000 drop off the value of my house.”

The neighbor had good reason to be afraid. Bill and Daisy Myers were from the other side of John C. Calhoun’s dual society. If they moved next door, housing policy almost guaranteed that their neighbors’ property values would decline.

In August 1957, state police pull teenagers out of a car during a demonstration against Bill and Daisy Myers, the first African Americans to move into Levittown, Pennsylvania. (AP Photo/Bill Ingraham)

Whereas shortly before the New Deal, a typical mortgage required a large down payment and full repayment within about 10 years, the creation of the Home Owners’ Loan Corporation in 1933 and then the Federal Housing Administration the following year allowed banks to offer loans requiring no more than 10 percent down, amortized over 20 to 30 years. “Without federal intervention in the housing market, massive suburbanization would have been impossible,” writes Thomas J. Sugrue, a historian at the University of Pennsylvania. “In 1930, only 30 percent of Americans owned their own homes; by 1960, more than 60 percent were home owners. Home ownership became an emblem of American citizenship.”

That emblem was not to be awarded to blacks. The American real-estate industry believed segregation to be a moral principle. As late as 1950, the National Association of Real Estate Boards’ code of ethics warned that “a Realtor should never be instrumental in introducing into a neighborhood ... any race or nationality, or any individuals whose presence will clearly be detrimental to property values.” A 1943 brochure specified that such potential undesirables might include madams, bootleggers, gangsters—and “a colored man of means who was giving his children a college education and thought they were entitled to live among whites.”

The federal government concurred. It was the Home Owners' Loan Corporation, not a private trade association, that pioneered the practice of redlining, selectively granting loans and insisting that any property it insured be covered by a restrictive covenant—a clause in the deed forbidding the sale of the property to anyone other than whites. Millions of dollars flowed from tax coffers into segregated white neighborhoods.

One man said his black neighbor was “probably a nice guy, but every time I look at him I see \$2,000 drop off the value of my house.”

“For perhaps the first time, the federal government embraced the discriminatory attitudes of the marketplace,” the historian Kenneth T. Jackson wrote in his 1985 book, *Crabgrass Frontier*, a history of suburbanization. “Previously, prejudices were personalized and individualized; FHA exhorted segregation and enshrined it as public policy. Whole areas of cities were declared ineligible for loan guarantees.” Redlining was not officially outlawed until 1968, by the Fair Housing Act. By then the damage was done—and reports of redlining by banks have continued.

The federal government is premised on equal fealty from all its citizens, who in return are to receive equal treatment. But as late as the mid-20th century, this bargain was not granted to black people, who repeatedly paid a higher price for citizenship and received less in return. Plunder had been the essential feature of slavery, of the society described by Calhoun. But practically a full century after the end of the Civil War and the abolition of slavery, the plunder—quiet, systemic, submerged—continued even amidst the aims and achievements of New Deal liberals.

VI. Making The Second Ghetto

TODAY CHICAGO is one of the most segregated cities in the country, a fact that reflects assiduous planning. In the effort to uphold white supremacy at every level down to the neighborhood, Chicago—a city founded by the black fur trader Jean Baptiste Point du Sable—has long been a pioneer. The efforts began in earnest in 1917, when the Chicago Real Estate Board, horrified by the influx of southern blacks, lobbied to zone the entire city by race. But after the Supreme Court ruled against explicit racial zoning that year, the city was forced to pursue its agenda by more-discreet means.

Like the Home Owners' Loan Corporation, the Federal Housing Administration initially insisted on restrictive covenants, which helped bar blacks and other ethnic undesirables from receiving federally backed home loans. By the 1940s, Chicago led the nation in the use of these restrictive covenants, and about half of all residential neighborhoods in the city were effectively off-limits to blacks.

It is common today to become misty-eyed about the old black ghetto, where doctors and lawyers lived next door to meatpackers and steelworkers, who themselves lived next door to prostitutes and the unemployed. This segregationist nostalgia ignores the actual conditions endured by the people living there—vermin and arson, for instance—and ignores the fact that the old ghetto was premised on denying black people privileges enjoyed by white Americans.

In 1948, when the Supreme Court ruled that restrictive covenants, while permissible, were not enforceable by judicial action, Chicago had other weapons at the ready. The Illinois state legislature had already given Chicago's city council the right to approve—and thus to veto—any public housing in the city's wards. This came in handy in 1949, when a new federal housing act sent millions of tax dollars into Chicago and other cities around the country. Beginning in 1950, site selection for public housing proceeded entirely on the grounds of segregation. By the 1960s, the city had created with its vast housing projects what the historian Arnold R. Hirsch calls a “second ghetto,” one larger than the old Black Belt but just as impermeable. More than 98 percent of all the family public-housing units built in Chicago between 1950 and the mid-1960s were built in all-black neighborhoods.

Governmental embrace of segregation was driven by the virulent racism of Chicago's white citizens. White neighborhoods vulnerable to black encroachment formed block associations for the sole purpose of enforcing segregation. They lobbied fellow whites not to sell. They lobbied those blacks who did manage to buy to sell back. In 1949, a group of Englewood Catholics formed block associations intended to “keep up the neighborhood.” Translation: keep black people out. And when civic engagement was not enough, when government failed, when private banks could no longer hold the line, Chicago turned to an old tool in the American repertoire—racial violence. “The pattern of terrorism is easily discernible,” concluded a Chicago civic group in the 1940s. “It is at the seams of the black ghetto in all directions.” On July 1 and 2 of 1946, a mob of thousands assembled in Chicago's Park Manor neighborhood, hoping

to eject a black doctor who'd recently moved in. The mob pelted the house with rocks and set the garage on fire. The doctor moved away.

In 1947, after a few black veterans moved into the Fernwood section of Chicago, three nights of rioting broke out; gangs of whites yanked blacks off streetcars and beat them. Two years later, when a union meeting attended by blacks in Englewood triggered rumors that a home was being “sold to niggers,” blacks (and whites thought to be sympathetic to them) were beaten in the streets. In 1951, thousands of whites in Cicero, 20 minutes or so west of downtown Chicago, attacked an apartment building that housed a single black family, throwing bricks and firebombs through the windows and setting the apartment on fire. A Cook County grand jury declined to charge the rioters—and instead indicted the family's NAACP attorney, the apartment's white owner, and the owner's attorney and rental agent, charging them with conspiring to lower property values. Two years after that, whites picketed and planted explosives in South Deering, about 30 minutes from downtown Chicago, to force blacks out.

The September 1966 Cicero protest against housing discrimination was one of the first nonviolent civil-rights campaigns launched near a major city. (Associated Press) When terrorism ultimately failed, white homeowners simply fled the neighborhood. The traditional terminology, *white flight*, implies a kind of natural expression of preference. In fact, white flight was a triumph of social engineering, orchestrated by the shared racist presumptions of America's public and private sectors. For should any nonracist white families decide that integration might not be so bad as a matter of principle or practicality, they still had to contend with the hard facts of American housing policy: When the mid-20th-century white homeowner claimed that the presence of a Bill and Daisy Myers decreased his property value, he was not merely engaging in racist dogma—he was accurately observing the impact of federal policy on market prices. Redlining destroyed the possibility of investment wherever black people lived.

VII. “A Lot Of People Fell By The Way”

SPECULATORS IN NORTH LAWNSDALE, and at the edge of the black ghettos, knew there was money to be made off white panic. They resorted to “block-busting”—spooking whites into selling cheap before the neighborhood became black. They would hire a black woman to walk up and down the street with a stroller. Or they'd hire someone

to call a number in the neighborhood looking for “Johnny Mae.” Then they’d cajole whites into selling at low prices, informing them that the more blacks who moved in, the more the value of their homes would decline, so better to sell now. With these white-fled homes in hand, speculators then turned to the masses of black people who had streamed northward as part of the Great Migration, or who were desperate to escape the ghettos: the speculators would take the houses they’d just bought cheap through block-busting and sell them to blacks on contract.

To keep up with his payments and keep his heat on, Clyde Ross took a second job at the post office and then a third job delivering pizza. His wife took a job working at Marshall Field. He had to take some of his children out of private school. He was not able to be at home to supervise his children or help them with their homework. Money and time that Ross wanted to give his children went instead to enrich white speculators.

“The problem was the money,” Ross told me. “Without the money, you can’t move. You can’t educate your kids. You can’t give them the right kind of food. Can’t make the house look good. They think this neighborhood is where they supposed to be. It changes their outlook. My kids were going to the best schools in this neighborhood, and I couldn’t keep them in there.”

Mattie Lewis came to Chicago from her native Alabama in the mid-’40s, when she was 21, persuaded by a friend who told her she could get a job as a hairdresser. Instead she was hired by Western Electric, where she worked for 41 years. I met Lewis in the home of her neighbor Ethel Weatherspoon. Both had owned homes in North Lawndale for more than 50 years. Both had bought their houses on contract. Both had been active with Clyde Ross in the Contract Buyers League’s effort to garner restitution from contract sellers who’d operated in North Lawndale, banks who’d backed the scheme, and even the Federal Housing Administration. We were joined by Jack Macnamara, who’d been an organizing force in the Contract Buyers League when it was founded, in 1968. Our gathering had the feel of a reunion, because the writer James Alan McPherson had profiled the Contract Buyers League for *The Atlantic* back in 1972.

"We still marching round in the slave circle because we don't want to be hurt by society's slave chain.... Move out a little bit further! Nip the grass out there because it's pretty!"

tract buying years before. Very few of the Lawndale people make distinctions between Jewish and other white Americans. This point was made, with some sly humor, by Clyde Ross, the CBL co-chairman, when his deposition was taken by a lawyer for the sellers. According to Ross, he was asked whether he had ever spoken about the CBL at a synagogue. "I said, 'Hell no!'" Ross relates. "He said, 'Well, I happen to know that you made a speech in Highland Park at a Jewish synagogue.' I said, 'You see, all of y'all look alike to me.' I said, 'I don't know a Jew from a Polish or a Italian or a Irish. I don't know who I was speaking to down there. Only thing I know is that all y'all was white.' I said, 'You can call it what you want.' He got very angry, because he thought I should know what a Jew was. I don't know nothin' about no Jew. I thought it was a religion. And he's white. So he's a white man as far as I'm concerned." Ross pauses a bit before adding: "He got very angry because I put him down with the Polish."

"I think that when you get off on race you lose your point and your goal," Mrs. Ruth Wells says.

But there is an additional religious dimension involved, which may explain why a group of Northern, inner-city black people were able to maintain an organization as complex as the CBL for over four years. The Lawndale people are primarily Baptist. Most are middle-aged, and most are migrants from Alabama, Arkansas, and Mississippi. The structure of their Wednesday night meetings resembles that of a Baptist church service. In a sense, the CBL people have abstracted the form of Sunday morning storefront church meetings and reassembled it around an economic issue, in much the same way that Martin Luther King managed to reassemble the religious convictions of Southern black church people around political and economic issues during the early sixties.

Every Wednesday night during the first three years of the CBL, Mrs. Luceal Johnson and other Lawndale women would cook a communion dinner in Jack Macnamara's apartment. The atmosphere would be relaxed and gossipy, with contract buyers and white lawyers sitting down to plates of fried chicken. Then they would walk the few blocks to Martin Luther King Hall, in the basement of Presentation Church, for the meeting.

A long prayer, in the rhythmic, sing-song idiom of a fundamentalist black minister, usually precedes each meeting. All prayers are spontaneous, asking God for guidance, offering thanks for the progress of the League, and usually including references to the sell-

ers, judges, and recent incidents involving the League. The people sit silently with heads bowed during the prayers, but afterwards a hymn or spiritual might be sung by the entire audience. Then a progress report is given by either Charles Baker, the CBL chairman, or Clyde Ross, the co-chairman. Ross's deliveries, more free-wheeling than Baker's, usually weave in reports of CBL progress and failures with inspirational asides and references to the Old Testament. Besides a mastery of the evangelical idiom, Ross is able to evoke the mood of a black church sermon: the call and response, the repetition of certain patterns of words known by each member of the audience since childhood church services, the question-and-answer dialogue between minister and audience, the building of his speeches to an emotional epiphany which provides a cathartic sense of union between speaker and audience. He has talked of Moses delivering the people across the Red Sea, of Ezekiel looking down into the Valley of Dry Bones (both references are to Macnamara), and of Pharaoh's Army (the sheriff's deputies and security guards who eventually evicted a number of people from their homes). Easygoing, introspective, and more than a little concerned over his lack of formal education, Ross nonetheless undergoes an almost complete change of personality when addressing the CBL members.

At one point, Ross offered the following speech at a Wednesday night meeting:

Let me tell you a story that I experienced when I was quite young. One of my chores around the family home in the South was to graze the cow. We had no pasture, so we had to graze the cow wherever we could find grassy areas. So we would put a chain around the cow's foot, and we would lock it down real tight, and then we would drive an iron peg down and fasten the other end of the chain onto this peg. The cow would go around in this circle and nibble all the grass she could nibble in this circle until there was no more. But one day I came back to water her and the chain was off, and she could have got away. But she was still going round in this circle because she was afraid of the pinch of the chain. That's the way some of us are right today. We can get out! We can get out now! But we still marching round in the slave circle because we don't want to be hurt by society's slave chain. We still feel it on our legs. We're loose! We are loose! Move out! Move out a little bit further! Nip the grass out there because it's pretty! Just move! The chain is gone. It's only you that think it's there. Move out! And stop these men from robbing you! And stop these men from persecuting you! Move out! And get some of this land that was yours from the start! The chain is off.



Above, a West Side mural.
Right, CBL co-chairman Clyde Ross.
Below, buyer Mrs. Luceal Johnson.



Click the image above to download a PDF version of *The Atlantic's* April 1972 profile of the Contract Buyers League.

Weatherspoon bought her home in 1957. "Most of the whites started moving out," she told me. "'The blacks are coming. The blacks are coming.' They actually said that. They had signs up: DON'T SELL TO BLACKS."

Before moving to North Lawndale, Lewis and her husband tried moving to Cicero after seeing a house advertised for sale there. "Sorry, I just sold it today," the Realtor told Lewis's husband. "I told him, 'You know they don't want you in Cicero,' " Lewis recalls. " "They ain't going to let nobody black in Cicero.' "

In 1958, the couple bought a home in North Lawndale on contract. They were not blind to the unfairness. But Lewis, born in the teeth of Jim Crow, considered American piracy—black people keep on making it, white people keep on taking it—a fact of nature. "All I wanted was a house. And that was the only way I could get it. They weren't giving black people loans at that time," she said. "We thought, 'This is the way it is. We going to do it till we die, and they ain't never going to accept us. That's just the way it is.'"

“The only way you were going to buy a home was to do it the way they wanted,” she continued. “And I was determined to get me a house. If everybody else can have one, I want one too. I had worked for white people in the South. And I saw how these white people were living in the North and I thought, ‘One day I’m going to live just like them.’ I wanted cabinets and all these things these other people have.”

White flight was not an accident—it was a triumph of racist social engineering.

Whenever she visited white co-workers at their homes, she saw the difference. “I could see we were just getting ripped off,” she said. “I would see things and I would say, ‘I’d like to do this at my house.’ And they would say, ‘Do it,’ but I would think, ‘I can’t, because it costs us so much more.’ ”

I asked Lewis and Weatherspoon how they kept up on payments.

“You paid it and kept working,” Lewis said of the contract. “When that payment came up, you knew you had to pay it.”

“You cut down on the light bill. Cut down on your food bill,” Weatherspoon interjected.

Ethel Weatherspoon at her home in North Lawndale. After she bought it in 1957, she says, “most of the whites started moving out.” (Carlos Javier Ortiz)

“You cut down on things for your child, that was the main thing,” said Lewis. “My oldest wanted to be an artist and my other wanted to be a dancer and my other wanted to take music.”

Lewis and Weatherspoon, like Ross, were able to keep their homes. The suit did not win them any remuneration. But it forced contract sellers to the table, where they allowed some members of the Contract Buyers League to move into regular mortgages or simply take over their houses outright. By then they’d been bilked for thousands. In talking with Lewis and Weatherspoon, I was seeing only part of the picture—the tiny minority who’d managed to hold on to their homes. But for all our exceptional ones, for every Barack and Michelle Obama, for every Ethel

Weatherspoon or Clyde Ross, for every black survivor, there are so many thousands gone.

Deputy sheriffs patrol a Chicago street in 1970 after a dozen Contract Buyers League families were evicted. (Courtesy of Sun-Times Media)

“A lot of people fell by the way,” Lewis told me. “One woman asked me if I would keep all her china. She said, ‘They ain’t going to set you out.’ ”

VIII. “Negro Poverty is not White Poverty”

ON A RECENT SPRING AFTERNOON in North Lawndale, I visited Billy Lamar Brooks Sr. Brooks has been an activist since his youth in the Black Panther Party, when he aided the Contract Buyers League. I met him in his office at the Better Boys Foundation, a staple of North Lawndale whose mission is to direct local kids off the streets and into jobs and college. Brooks’s work is personal. On June 14, 1991, his 19-year-old son, Billy Jr., was shot and killed. “These guys tried to stick him up,” Brooks told me. “I suspect he could have been involved in some things ... He’s always on my mind. Every day.”

Brooks was not raised in the streets, though in such a neighborhood it is impossible to avoid the influence. “I was in church three or four times a week. That’s where the girls were,” he said, laughing. “The stark reality is still there. There’s no shield from life. You got to go to school. I lived here. I went to Marshall High School. Over here were the Egyptian Cobras. Over there were the Vice Lords.”

Brooks has since moved away from Chicago’s West Side. But he is still working in North Lawndale. If “you got a nice house, you live in a nice neighborhood, then you are less prone to violence, because your space is not deprived,” Brooks said. “You got a security point. You don’t need no protection.” But if “you grow up in a place like this, housing sucks. When they tore down the projects here, they left the high-rises and came to the neighborhood with that gang mentality. You don’t have nothing, so you going to take something, even if it’s not real. You don’t have no street, but in your mind it’s yours.”

Video: The Guardian of North Lawndale

Visit North Lawndale today with Billy Brooks

We walked over to a window behind his desk. A group of young black men were hanging out in front of a giant mural memorializing two black men: IN LOVIN MEMORY QUENTIN AKA “Q,” JULY 18, 1974 ♥ MARCH 2, 2012. The name and face of the other man had been spray-painted over by a rival group. The men drank beer. Occasionally a car would cruise past, slow to a crawl, then stop. One of the men would approach the car and make an exchange, then the car would drive off. Brooks had known all of these young men as boys.

“That’s their corner,” he said.

We watched another car roll through, pause briefly, then drive off. “No respect, no shame,” Brooks said. “That’s what they do. From that alley to that corner. They don’t go no farther than that. See the big brother there? He almost died a couple of years ago. The one drinking the beer back there ... I know all of them. And the reason they feel safe here is cause of this building, and because they too chickenshit to go anywhere. But that’s their mentality. That’s their block.”

Brooks showed me a picture of a Little League team he had coached. He went down the row of kids, pointing out which ones were in jail, which ones were dead, and which ones were doing all right. And then he pointed out his son—“That’s my boy, Billy,” Brooks said. Then he wondered aloud if keeping his son with him while working in North Lawndale had hastened his death. “It’s a definite connection, because he was part of what I did here. And I think maybe I shouldn’t have exposed him. But then, I had to,” he said, “because I wanted him with me.”

From the White House on down, the myth holds that fatherhood is the great antidote to all that ails black people. But Billy Brooks Jr. had a father. Trayvon Martin had a father. Jordan Davis had a father. Adhering to middle-class norms has never shielded black people from plunder. Adhering to middle-class norms is what made Ethel Weatherspoon a lucrative target for rapacious speculators. Contract sellers did not target the very poor. They targeted black people who had worked hard enough to save a down payment and dreamed of the emblem of American citizenship—homeownership. It was not a tangle of pathology that put a target on Clyde Ross’s back. It was not a culture of poverty that singled out Mattie Lewis for “the thrill of

the chase and the kill.” Some black people always will be twice as good. But they generally find white predation to be thrice as fast.

Is affirmative action meant to increase “diversity”? If so, it only tangentially relates to the specific problems of black people.

Liberals today mostly view racism not as an active, distinct evil but as a relative of white poverty and inequality. They ignore the long tradition of this country actively punishing black success—and the elevation of that punishment, in the mid-20th century, to federal policy. President Lyndon Johnson may have noted in his historic civil-rights speech at Howard University in 1965 that “Negro poverty is not white poverty.” But his advisers and their successors were, and still are, loath to craft any policy that recognizes the difference.

After his speech, Johnson convened a group of civil-rights leaders, including the esteemed A. Philip Randolph and Bayard Rustin, to address the “ancient brutality.” In a strategy paper, they agreed with the president that “Negro poverty is a special, and particularly destructive, form of American poverty.” But when it came to specifically addressing the “particularly destructive,” Rustin’s group demurred, preferring to advance programs that addressed “all the poor, black and white.”

REPORTER’S NOTEBOOK

White Racism vs. White Resentment

“The idea that Affirmative Action justifies white resentment may be the greatest argument made for reparations—like ever.”

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The urge to use the moral force of the black struggle to address broader inequalities originates in both compassion and pragmatism. But it makes for ambiguous policy. Affirmative action’s precise aims, for instance, have always proved elusive. Is it meant to make amends for the crimes heaped upon black people? Not according to the Supreme Court. In its 1978 ruling in *Regents of the University of California v. Bakke*, the Court rejected “societal discrimination” as “an amorphous concept of injury that may be ageless in its reach into the past.” Is affirmative action meant to increase “diversity”? If so, it only tangentially relates to the specific problems of black people—the problem of what America has taken from them over several centuries.

This confusion about affirmative action's aims, along with our inability to face up to the particular history of white-imposed black disadvantage, dates back to the policy's origins. "There is no fixed and firm definition of affirmative action," an appointee in Johnson's Department of Labor declared. "Affirmative action is anything that you have to do to get results. But this does not necessarily include preferential treatment."

Yet America was built on the preferential treatment of white people—395 years of it. Vaguely endorsing a cuddly, feel-good diversity does very little to redress this.

Today, progressives are loath to invoke white supremacy as an explanation for anything. On a practical level, the hesitation comes from the dim view the Supreme Court has taken of the reforms of the 1960s. The Voting Rights Act has been gutted. The Fair Housing Act might well be next. Affirmative action is on its last legs. In substituting a broad class struggle for an anti-racist struggle, progressives hope to assemble a coalition by changing the subject.

The politics of racial evasion are seductive. But the record is mixed. Aid to Families With Dependent Children was originally written largely to exclude blacks—yet by the 1990s it was perceived as a giveaway to blacks. The Affordable Care Act makes no mention of race, but this did not keep Rush Limbaugh from denouncing it as reparations. Moreover, the act's expansion of Medicaid was effectively made optional, meaning that many poor blacks in the former Confederate states do not benefit from it. The Affordable Care Act, like Social Security, will eventually expand its reach to those left out; in the meantime, black people will be injured.

Billy Brooks, who assisted the Contract Buyers League, still works in the neighborhood, helping kids escape poverty and violence. (Carlos Javier Ortiz) "All that it would take to sink a new WPA program would be some skillfully packaged footage of black men leaning on shovels smoking cigarettes," the sociologist Douglas S. Massey writes. "Papering over the issue of race makes for bad social theory, bad research, and bad public policy." To ignore the fact that one of the oldest republics in the world was erected on a foundation of white supremacy, to pretend that the problems of a dual society are the same as the problems of unregulated capitalism, is to cover the sin of national plunder with the sin of national lying. The lie ignores the fact that reducing American poverty and ending white supremacy are not the same. The lie ignores the fact that closing the "achievement gap" will do nothing to close

the “injury gap,” in which black college graduates still suffer higher unemployment rates than white college graduates, and black job applicants without criminal records enjoy roughly the same chance of getting hired as white applicants *with* criminal records.

Chicago, like the country at large, embraced policies that placed black America’s most energetic, ambitious, and thrifty countrymen beyond the pale of society and marked them as rightful targets for legal theft. The effects reverberate beyond the families who were robbed to the community that beholds the spectacle. Don’t just picture Clyde Ross working three jobs so he could hold on to his home. Think of his North Lawndale neighbors—their children, their nephews and nieces—and consider how watching this affects them. Imagine yourself as a young black child watching your elders play by all the rules only to have their possessions tossed out in the street and to have their most sacred possession—their home—taken from them.

The message the young black boy receives from his country, Billy Brooks says, is “ ‘You ain’t shit. You not no good. The only thing you are worth is working for us. You will never own anything. You not going to get an education. We are sending your ass to the penitentiary.’ They’re telling you no matter how hard you struggle, no matter what you put down, you ain’t shit. ‘We’re going to take what you got. You will never own anything, nigger.’ ”

IX. Toward A New Country

WHEN CLYDE ROSS WAS A CHILD, his older brother Winter had a seizure. He was picked up by the authorities and delivered to Parchman Farm, a 20,000-acre state prison in the Mississippi Delta region.

“He was a gentle person,” Clyde Ross says of his brother. “You know, he was good to everybody. And he started having spells, and he couldn’t control himself. And they had him picked up, because they thought he was dangerous.”

Built at the turn of the century, Parchman was supposed to be a progressive and reformist response to the problem of “Negro crime.” In fact it was the gulag of Mississippi, an object of terror to African Americans in the Delta. In the early years of the 20th century, Mississippi Governor James K. Vardaman used to amuse himself by releasing black convicts into the surrounding wilderness and hunting them down with

bloodhounds. “Throughout the American South,” writes David M. Oshinsky in his book *Worse Than Slavery*, “Parchman Farm is synonymous with punishment and brutality, as well it should be ... Parchman is the quintessential penal farm, the closest thing to slavery that survived the Civil War.”

When the Ross family went to retrieve Winter, the authorities told them that Winter had died. When the Ross family asked for his body, the authorities at Parchman said they had buried him. The family never saw Winter’s body.

And this was just one of their losses.

Scholars have long discussed methods by which America might make reparations to those on whose labor and exclusion the country was built. In the 1970s, the Yale Law professor Boris Bittker argued in *The Case for Black Reparations* that a rough price tag for reparations could be determined by multiplying the number of African Americans in the population by the difference in white and black per capita income. That number—\$34 billion in 1973, when Bittker wrote his book—could be added to a reparations program each year for a decade or two. Today Charles Ogletree, the Harvard Law School professor, argues for something broader: a program of job training and public works that takes racial justice as its mission but includes the poor of all races.

To celebrate freedom and democracy while forgetting America’s origins in a slavery economy is patriotism à la carte.

Perhaps no statistic better illustrates the enduring legacy of our country’s shameful history of treating black people as sub-citizens, sub-Americans, and sub-humans than the wealth gap. Reparations would seek to close this chasm. But as surely as the creation of the wealth gap required the cooperation of every aspect of the society, bridging it will require the same.

When we think of white supremacy, we picture Colored Only signs, but we should picture pirate flags.

Perhaps after a serious discussion and debate—the kind that HR 40 proposes—we may find that the country can never fully repay African Americans. But we stand to discover much about ourselves in such a discussion—and that is perhaps what scares us. The idea of reparations is frightening not simply because we might lack the ability

to pay. The idea of reparations threatens something much deeper—America’s heritage, history, and standing in the world.

THE EARLY AMERICAN ECONOMY was built on slave labor. The Capitol and the White House were built by slaves. President James K. Polk traded slaves from the Oval Office. The laments about “black pathology,” the criticism of black family structures by pundits and intellectuals, ring hollow in a country whose existence was predicated on the torture of black fathers, on the rape of black mothers, on the sale of black children. An honest assessment of America’s relationship to the black family reveals the country to be not its nurturer but its destroyer.

And this destruction did not end with slavery. Discriminatory laws joined the equal burden of citizenship to unequal distribution of its bounty. These laws reached their apex in the mid-20th century, when the federal government—through housing policies—engineered the wealth gap, which remains with us to this day. When we think of white supremacy, we picture COLORED ONLY signs, but we should picture pirate flags.

On some level, we have always grasped this.

“Negro poverty is not white poverty,” President Johnson said in his historic civil-rights speech.

Many of its causes and many of its cures are the same. But there are differences—deep, corrosive, obstinate differences—radiating painful roots into the community and into the family, and the nature of the individual. These differences are not racial differences. They are solely and simply the consequence of ancient brutality, past injustice, and present prejudice.

We invoke the words of Jefferson and Lincoln because they say something about our legacy and our traditions. We do this because we recognize our links to the past—at least when they flatter us. But black history does not flatter American democracy; it chastens it. The popular mocking of reparations as a harebrained scheme authored by wild-eyed lefties and intellectually unserious black nationalists is fear masquerading as laughter. Black nationalists have always perceived something unmentionable about America that integrationists dare not acknowledge—that white supremacy is not merely the work of hotheaded demagogues, or a matter of false consciousness, but a force so fundamental to America that it is difficult to imagine the country without it.

And so we must imagine a new country. Reparations—by which I mean the full acceptance of our collective biography and its consequences—is the price we must pay to see ourselves squarely. The recovering alcoholic may well have to live with his illness for the rest of his life. But at least he is not living a drunken lie. Reparations beckons us to reject the intoxication of hubris and see America as it is—the work of fallible humans.

Won't reparations divide us? Not any more than we are already divided. The wealth gap merely puts a number on something we feel but cannot say—that American prosperity was ill-gotten and selective in its distribution. What is needed is an airing of family secrets, a settling with old ghosts. What is needed is a healing of the American psyche and the banishment of white guilt.

What I'm talking about is more than recompense for past injustices—more than a handout, a payoff, hush money, or a reluctant bribe. What I'm talking about is a national reckoning that would lead to spiritual renewal. Reparations would mean the end of scarfing hot dogs on the Fourth of July while denying the facts of our heritage. Reparations would mean the end of yelling “patriotism” while waving a Confederate flag. Reparations would mean a revolution of the American consciousness, a reconciling of our self-image as the great democratizer with the facts of our history.

X. “There Will Be No ‘Reparations’ From Germany”

WE ARE NOT the first to be summoned to such a challenge.

In 1952, when West Germany began the process of making amends for the Holocaust, it did so under conditions that should be instructive to us. Resistance was violent. Very few Germans believed that Jews were entitled to anything. Only 5 percent of West Germans surveyed reported feeling guilty about the Holocaust, and only 29 percent believed that Jews were owed restitution from the German people.

REPORTER'S NOTEBOOK

The Auschwitz All Around Us

“It's very hard to accept white supremacy as a structure erected by actual people, as a choice, as an interest, as opposed to a momentary bout of insanity.”

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“The rest,” the historian Tony Judt wrote in his 2005 book, *Postwar*, “were divided between those (some two-fifths of respondents) who thought that only people ‘who really committed something’ were responsible and should pay, and those (21 percent) who thought ‘that the Jews themselves were partly responsible for what happened to them during the Third Reich.’ ”

Germany’s unwillingness to squarely face its history went beyond polls. Movies that suggested a societal responsibility for the Holocaust beyond Hitler were banned. “The German soldier fought bravely and honorably for his homeland,” claimed President Eisenhower, endorsing the Teutonic national myth. Judt wrote, “Throughout the fifties West German officialdom encouraged a comfortable view of the German past in which the Wehrmacht was heroic, while Nazis were in a minority and properly punished.”

Konrad Adenauer, the postwar German chancellor, was in favor of reparations, but his own party was divided, and he was able to get an agreement passed only with the votes of the Social Democratic opposition.

“If I could take German property without sitting down with them for even a minute but go in with jeeps and machine guns,” said David Ben-Gurion, “I would do that.” Among the Jews of Israel, reparations provoked violent and venomous reactions ranging from denunciation to assassination plots. On January 7, 1952, as the Knesset—the Israeli parliament—convened to discuss the prospect of a reparations agreement with West Germany, Menachem Begin, the future prime minister of Israel, stood in front of a large crowd, inveighing against the country that had plundered the lives, labor, and property of his people. Begin claimed that all Germans were Nazis and guilty of murder. His condemnations then spread to his own young state. He urged the crowd to stop paying taxes and claimed that the nascent Israeli nation characterized the fight over whether or not to accept reparations as a “war to the death.” When alerted that the police watching the gathering were carrying tear gas, allegedly of German manufacture, Begin yelled, “The same gases that asphyxiated our parents!”

Begin then led the crowd in an oath to never forget the victims of the Shoah, lest “my right hand lose its cunning” and “my tongue cleave to the roof of my mouth.” He took the crowd through the streets toward the Knesset. From the rooftops, police

repelled the crowd with tear gas and smoke bombs. But the wind shifted, and the gas blew back toward the Knesset, billowing through windows shattered by rocks. In the chaos, Begin and Prime Minister David Ben-Gurion exchanged insults. Two hundred civilians and 140 police officers were wounded. Nearly 400 people were arrested. Knesset business was halted.

Begin then addressed the chamber with a fiery speech condemning the actions the legislature was about to take. “Today you arrested hundreds,” he said. “Tomorrow you may arrest thousands. No matter, they will go, they will sit in prison. We will sit there with them. If necessary, we will be killed with them. But there will be no ‘reparations’ from Germany.”

Nahum Goldman, the president of the Jewish Claims Commission (center), signs 1952 reparations agreements between Germany and Israel. The two delegations entered the room by different doors, and the ceremony was carried out in silence. (Associated Press)

Survivors of the Holocaust feared laundering the reputation of Germany with money, and mortgaging the memory of their dead. Beyond that, there was a taste for revenge. “My soul would be at rest if I knew there would be 6 million German dead to match the 6 million Jews,” said Meir Dworzecki, who’d survived the concentration camps of Estonia.

Ben-Gurion countered this sentiment, not by repudiating vengeance but with cold calculation: “If I could take German property without sitting down with them for even a minute but go in with jeeps and machine guns to the warehouses and take it, I would do that—if, for instance, we had the ability to send a hundred divisions and tell them, ‘Take it.’ But we can’t do that.”

The reparations conversation set off a wave of bomb attempts by Israeli militants. One was aimed at the foreign ministry in Tel Aviv. Another was aimed at Chancellor Adenauer himself. And one was aimed at the port of Haifa, where the goods bought with reparations money were arriving. West Germany ultimately agreed to pay Israel 3.45 billion deutsche marks, or more than \$7 billion in today’s dollars. Individual reparations claims followed—for psychological trauma, for offense to Jewish honor, for halting law careers, for life insurance, for time spent in concentration camps. Seventeen percent of funds went toward purchasing ships. “By the end of 1961, these

reparations vessels constituted two-thirds of the Israeli merchant fleet,” writes the Israeli historian Tom Segev in his book *The Seventh Million*. “From 1953 to 1963, the reparations money funded about a third of the total investment in Israel’s electrical system, which tripled its capacity, and nearly half the total investment in the railways.”

Israel’s GNP tripled during the 12 years of the agreement. The Bank of Israel attributed 15 percent of this growth, along with 45,000 jobs, to investments made with reparations money. But Segev argues that the impact went far beyond that. Reparations “had indisputable psychological and political importance,” he writes.

Reparations could not make up for the murder perpetrated by the Nazis. But they did launch Germany’s reckoning with itself, and perhaps provided a road map for how a great civilization might make itself worthy of the name.

Assessing the reparations agreement, David Ben-Gurion said:

For the first time in the history of relations between people, a precedent has been created by which a great State, as a result of moral pressure alone, takes it upon itself to pay compensation to the victims of the government that preceded it. For the first time in the history of a people that has been persecuted, oppressed, plundered and despoiled for hundreds of years in the countries of Europe, a persecutor and despoiler has been obliged to return part of his spoils and has even undertaken to make collective reparation as partial compensation for material losses.

Something more than moral pressure calls America to reparations. We cannot escape our history. All of our solutions to the great problems of health care, education, housing, and economic inequality are troubled by what must go unspoken. “The reason black people are so far behind now is not because of now,” Clyde Ross told me. “It’s because of then.” In the early 2000s, Charles Ogletree went to Tulsa, Oklahoma, to meet with the survivors of the 1921 race riot that had devastated “Black Wall Street.” The past was not the past to them. “It was amazing seeing these black women and men who were crippled, blind, in wheelchairs,” Ogletree told me. “I had no idea who they were and why they wanted to see me. They said, ‘We want you to represent us in this lawsuit.’”

In the spring of 1921, a white mob leveled “Black Wall Street” in Tulsa, Oklahoma. Here, wounded prisoners ride in an Army truck during the martial law

imposed by the Oklahoma governor in response to the race riot. (Hulton-Deutsch Collection/Corbis)

A commission authorized by the Oklahoma legislature produced a report affirming that the riot, the knowledge of which had been suppressed for years, had happened. But the lawsuit ultimately failed, in 2004. Similar suits pushed against corporations such as Aetna (which insured slaves) and Lehman Brothers (whose co-founding partner owned them) also have thus far failed. These results are dispiriting, but the crime with which reparations activists charge the country implicates more than just a few towns or corporations. The crime indicts the American people themselves, at every level, and in nearly every configuration. A crime that implicates the entire American people deserves its hearing in the legislative body that represents them.

John Conyers's HR 40 is the vehicle for that hearing. No one can know what would come out of such a debate. Perhaps no number can fully capture the multi-century plunder of black people in America. Perhaps the number is so large that it can't be imagined, let alone calculated and dispensed. But I believe that wrestling publicly with these questions matters as much as—if not more than—the specific answers that might be produced. An America that asks what it owes its most vulnerable citizens is improved and humane. An America that looks away is ignoring not just the sins of the past but the sins of the present and the certain sins of the future. More important than any single check cut to any African American, the payment of reparations would represent America's maturation out of the childhood myth of its innocence into a wisdom worthy of its founders.

IN 2010, JACOB S. RUGH, then a doctoral candidate at Princeton, and the sociologist Douglas S. Massey published a study of the recent foreclosure crisis. Among its drivers, they found an old foe: segregation. Black home buyers—even after controlling for factors like creditworthiness—were still more likely than white home buyers to be steered toward subprime loans. Decades of racist housing policies by the American government, along with decades of racist housing practices by American businesses, had conspired to concentrate African Americans in the same neighborhoods. As in North Lawndale half a century earlier, these neighborhoods were filled with people who had been cut off from mainstream financial institutions. When subprime lenders went looking for prey, they found black people waiting like ducks in a pen.

“Wells Fargo mortgage had an emerging-markets unit that specifically targeted black churches.”

“High levels of segregation create a natural market for subprime lending,” Rugh and Massey write, “and cause riskier mortgages, and thus foreclosures, to accumulate disproportionately in racially segregated cities’ minority neighborhoods.”

Plunder in the past made plunder in the present efficient. The banks of America understood this. In 2005, Wells Fargo promoted a series of Wealth Building Strategies seminars. Dubbing itself “the nation’s leading originator of home loans to ethnic minority customers,” the bank enrolled black public figures in an ostensible effort to educate blacks on building “generational wealth.” But the “wealth building” seminars were a front for wealth theft. In 2010, the Justice Department filed a discrimination suit against Wells Fargo alleging that the bank had shunted blacks into predatory loans regardless of their creditworthiness. This was not magic or coincidence or misfortune. It was racism reifying itself. According to *The New York Times*, affidavits found loan officers referring to their black customers as “mud people” and to their subprime products as “ghetto loans.”

“We just went right after them,” Beth Jacobson, a former Wells Fargo loan officer, told *The Times*. “Wells Fargo mortgage had an emerging-markets unit that specifically targeted black churches because it figured church leaders had a lot of influence and could convince congregants to take out subprime loans.”

In 2011, Bank of America agreed to pay \$355 million to settle charges of discrimination against its Countrywide unit. The following year, Wells Fargo settled its discrimination suit for more than \$175 million. But the damage had been done. In 2009, half the properties in Baltimore whose owners had been granted loans by Wells Fargo between 2005 and 2008 were vacant; 71 percent of these properties were in predominantly black neighborhoods.

TA-NEHISI COATES is a former national correspondent for *The Atlantic*. He is the author of *The Beautiful Struggle*, *Between the World and Me*, *We Were Eight Years in Power*, and *The Water Dancer*.

Why reparations to African Americans are necessary how to start now by Rhoda E HowardHassmann

<https://theconversation.com/why-reparations-to-african-americans-are-necessary-how-to-start-now-119581>

Academic rigour, journalistic flair

Five generations on Smith's Plantation Beaufort at South Carolina in 1862. [Timothy H. O'Sullivan/Library of Congress](#)

Why reparations to African-Americans are necessary – how to start now

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Disclosure statement

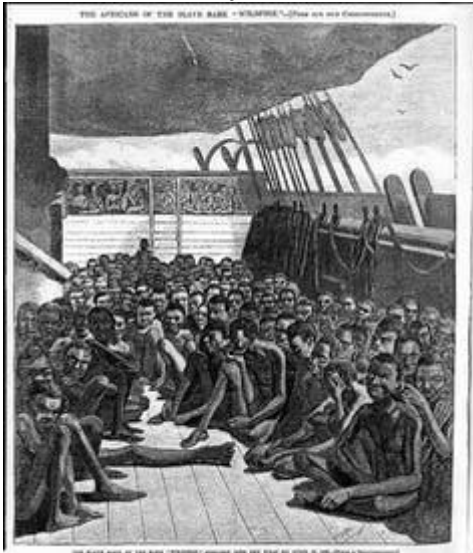
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In a 2016 poll, 58 per cent of African-Americans said they believed that the United States should pay financial reparations to African-Americans who are descendants of slaves. Only 15 per cent of whites agreed.

I am a white woman and I support reparations to African-Americans. I have published academic articles on the issue, including: “Official Apologies.” I am the author of *Reparations to Africa* and a co-editor of *The Age of Apology*.



The Africans of the slave bark Library of Congress

In 2005, the United Nations issued a short document which outlined the basic guidelines on the right to a remedy and reparation for victims of gross violations of human rights law. Financial compensation is one aspect of reparations mentioned in this document, but it is not the only one. Apology is important. So is commemoration and tributes to victims, and an accurate account of the violations.

Five years ago, author and journalist Ta-Nehisi Coates wrote a harrowing account of injustices to African-Americans in an article for *The Atlantic*. These injustices occurred during the period of enslavement, but also the Jim Crow era, the Civil Rights era and down to the present.

In his article, Coates called upon all Americans to acknowledge their “shameful history” including injustices of enslavement, terrorism, plunder and piracy committed against African-Americans. He wants all the facts to be accurately reported.

Accurate acknowledgement would be a first step in reparations.

Apology is a second step.

Apologies

So many governments, institutions and private businesses in the United States are implicated in slavery and post-1865 injustices that it would be impossible for them all to apologize at once. But a good start would be an apology for slavery by the president of the United States, joined by the governors of every state that ever permitted enslavement.

The text of the apology would have to be carefully negotiated with African-American community leaders.



At the bus station in Durham, N.C., in the 1930s. [Library of Congress/FSA](#)

The apology would also have to be carefully surrounded by ritual, so that its sincerity and seriousness would be apparent.

This could be followed by literally thousands of apologies by lower-level municipal governments, religious institutions and businesses. Every single institution would have to investigate its history and acknowledge and apologize for every single act of enslavement and discrimination against African-Americans.

Memorials

The next step would be to memorialize all these injustices. It is not enough to tear down monuments to leaders of the Confederate army. Memorials should be put up at public expense to African-Americans who fought against enslavement and later injustices.

Memorials should also be erected at sites of plantations, sites of protest and sites of known murders of African-Americans, from those who were lynched in decades past to those unjustly killed by police. These memorials are a way to assert that Black lives matter.

Financial reparations

Finally, there is the question of financial reparations and whether descendants of enslaved people should receive them. How, if at all, can all the descendants of enslaved African Americans be identified? Even if they can be identified, should they receive individual financial reparations?

Perhaps yes, to compensate for the huge gap in (mostly inherited) wealth between white and Black Americans. Perhaps African-Americans should be given a financial “boost” to help them on the road to moderate, middle-class security. But many white and other Americans might view this as unfair to other people who don’t enjoy such prosperity.

Alternately, perhaps the federal and state governments should pay group reparations to African Americans. Whites might be more willing to accept collective reparations of this kind.

One possibility is to invest in education, from shoring up predominantly African-American elementary schools to special university scholarships. One might argue that affirmative action programs have already accomplished this, but they have been weakened over the decades and, in any case, only apply at the university level.



Civil rights march on Washington, D.C., 1963. [Warren K Leffler/U.S. News & World Report Magazine Photograph Collection/Library of Congress/](#)

Another option is housing investment in predominantly African-American residential areas, especially where public housing projects are located. For decades, African-

Americans have been subjected to low-quality public housing and mortgage discrimination.

Yet another option is investment in African-Americans' health care, although one could argue that the whole country deserves this kind of investment. Nevertheless, if African-Americans suffer from some health problems at higher rates than white Americans, then reparations could include enhanced health care.

Many white and other Americans may oppose reparations to African-Americans on the grounds that neither they nor their ancestors had anything to do with the many ways African-Americans were and are oppressed.

But as citizens — whether of the U.S. or, in my case, Canada — we have a responsibility to make amends to fellow citizens who have been harmed by the past or present policies of our governments. Acknowledgement is a first step forward. Apologies, memorials and financial reparations continue the process.

Reparations are a way of making the country whole, by partially remedying the inherited inequalities that still plague African-Americans. They are a way of saying that African-Americans are, at long last, equal citizens of the United States of America and therefore deserving of its privileges and protections.

Pay What You Owe A Means to Reparations



Jude Jones

<https://medium.com/@kjude82/pay-what-you-owe-a-means-to-reparations-c96269157821>

Jun 26, 2019·7 min read

My parents were both born in 1947. My father grew up a sharecropper; he literally picked cotton. The people who owned the land our family tilled on were able to go to Louisiana State University; my father couldn't afford the \$500 per semester tuition at the "separate but equal" Southern University.

Until the day she passed, my mother would religiously use the bathroom before leaving the house, no matter how long or short the trip. She was trained to do so by her mother, so she wouldn't have to endure the indignity of using a "separate but equal" bathroom or water fountain.

My parents were educated in segregated [schools](#) with inferior facilities; born in segregated hospitals with inferior resources; used segregated financial institutions with an inferior capacity to lend. I'm not saying that these hospitals, schools, and financial institutions were worthless: they were, however, limited in what they could provide; thus my parents were limited in what they could attain. My parents had to work twice as hard by design to attain half as much as a white counterpart.

Every single African American, no matter how rich or how poor, can directly correlate the arc of their family's struggle to succeed with the effects of Jim Crow, do the same thing. The stories of my family are not just common; they are the standard. Pain from plunder are defining

characteristics of African-Americans. While many have found means of turning this pain in to profit, too many of us — entirely too many of us — are still stuck in cycles of stagnation that too many cynics blame on the moral failing of the plundered as opposed to the well documented moral failings of the plunderer.

No more.

The [all too common critique of reparations for black Americans](#) is centered on the backwards premise that because the work to figure out who was owed what and how much is hard to figure out, we shouldn't consider pursuing the policy. Cynics make this claim despite the trove of evidence that black Americans are worse off as a direct result of slavery, it's son Jim Crow, and the lingering effects of institutional racism.

Reparations are not some kindness bestowed from a benevolent master; nor is it a handout given to appease the masses. Reparations are earned from encumbrance of generations of policies of targeted plunder and specific pains. Reparations are a specific solution to a specific set of problems that arose from a specific set of indignities that persist today.

I propose that all Black Americans, defined as any American born during or before 1964 who was identified as Black on their birth certificate, have all debt (home loans, credit card loans, car loans, and education loans) forgiven. I also propose that these same Black Americans receive a one-time stipend equivalent to the average new home cost in either their county, the cost of 40 acres of land in their county or the average cost of a new home in the United States as of 2019, whichever is greater. I propose that these same Black Americans receive

government paid healthcare through the plan of their choosing for the remainder of their lives. Finally, I propose these Black Americans receive a yearly pension equal to \$1 above the poverty level income of one person, in addition to any additional pensions they may be eligible for (social security, military, etc.).

Blacks were institutionally prevented from attaining wealth. This reparations plan aims to correct that by specifically eliminating the barriers to wealth creation that were imposed on them by egregiously imposed societal taxes, including limited lending, over wrought interest rates, and redlining. Black Americans who qualify would also be guaranteed a life north of poverty and navigated towards a destination of stability and comfort.

Let's backtrack. I mentioned that my parents were directly affected by Jim Crow policies. These policies were official laws that were specifically meant to limit their ability to pursue the American dream that was often fantasized by young adults in their segregated movie theaters. Policies such as the [government sanctioned practice of redlining](#), which began under the direction of the Home Owners' Loan Corporation (HOLC) and is still informally practiced today by many of the nation's banks. The low interest loans funded by the HOLC were a direct pathway towards the middle class for many white Americans, while simultaneously locking Black Americans into a cycle of generational poverty due to being denied access to these loans. An initial pillar to any proposed reparations plan is to begin to correct the legacy of a government sponsored initiative meant to keep black Americans from having a true home by making the pathway to home ownership easier for descendants of those locked out of the American Dream.

Many of my peers are the first in their families to attend college and grad school. Many are the first to have a 6-figure job or to start a sustained business. Critics would use this as a means for saying that reparations aren't necessary. I contend, however, that a deeper look at their lives shows how much reparations are needed. Their income is not allowed to become wealth, because they're now responsible for supporting family members whose struggles can be directly traced to the remnants of Jim Crow policies. Even though these Black Americans are earning income, they are not growing wealth; [they may even lose any gains within one generation](#). Any serious discussion of reparations must include remuneration for those who still struggle individually. **I believe the pensions and healthcare provisions granted to those Black Americans born in 1964 and before should pass down, in full, to their direct descendants AND to their descendants. As wealth is generational, so must the support to break the cycles fostered upon the plundered. Any transfer of monies from the older generation to the younger generation, by whatever means they determine, should happen tax free. Finally, all educational costs, from child care to post-doctoral, should be fully covered for these individuals.** Again, the idea is creating wealth and eradicating disparities. The policies are not meant to make all Black people rich like the much cited (and now maligned) [Dave Chappelle skit](#) (though there are certainly arguments for doing so). They are, however, meant to keep black people out of poverty and on the road to building real, true, wealth.

While we strive to address the personal plunder of black peoples, we must acknowledge and address the institutions that were improperly served by slavery/discrimination. Think of all the Black-owned banks, Black-opened and operated schools, and Black owned businesses that started at a deficit due to lack of access to capital, that must compete on "equal footing" with

organizations that, in many cases, [built their wealth](#) directly from [engaging in slavery](#).

I propose that black serving institutions, defended as 1) institutions led by Blacks (owner is Black and CEO/President/Chairman of Board is Black) 2) staffed by at least 40% Blacks and 3) serve a population of at least 60% Black people would get *theirdebts cancelled and be allowed to borrow at super low government backed rates (1/4 of the current federal interest rate) for a minimum of 25 years, with another 20 years of slow rate increases until the benefits sunset. Finally, a special government agency, the Office of Black Equity, would be created to ensure oversight in EVERY federal office.**

How to fund this? Well, excusing the idea that the government is more than happy to go into debt funding wars or bailing out banks, there are other revenue streams, including: an additional cent on top of the proposed [2 percent super millionaire tax](#) as floated by Sen. Elizabeth Warren (D-MA). The tax would raise 2.75 trillion over 10 years by taxing the top tenth of one percent of wealth. My math is fuzzy, but an extra cent could generate well over 1.4 trillion to fund these programs. I would also propose a tax on public corporations of a certain market value (say, \$100 million) that don't reach certain diversity thresholds. If these companies are serious about increasing diversity in corporate America, their efforts will be reflected on the balance sheet. Research has shown that [companies with a diverse workforce experience benefits in innovation, work place culture, and increases in revenue](#). One way or another, you will help end the problem. Either hire black people and see the positive changes reflected on their balance sheet or pay a tax which will directly fund initiatives proposed under a federal reparations plan.

I'm not at all saying that this is the end all be all to the conversation; this is merely the start, based solely on a passionate love for black people and some back-of-the-envelope calculations. The legitimacy of our country's ability to be a moral compass through its ideals and values are at stake because of its inability to make amends for its original sin. Slavery was an earthquake that shook this country from the original 13 colonies to its expanded territories. America built a majestic empire and a marvel of the modern world on top of a shaky foundation. It's time for our leaders to solidify that foundation by repaying those that help to build it and suffered during a time of great prosperity. There is a sensible path forward and I hope to invalidate the idea that we can't identify who should receive reparations; deconstruct the notion that reparations only means giving everyone a check that they'll blow; and create a space for other, smarter, thinkers to build upon (or deconstruct) these ideas.

Five years ago, the idea of reparations was at best a fringe academic exercise; it's not a defining priority of nearly all Democratic candidates for President.

Let's keep up the energy; let's keep pushing; and let's see where we end up in another five years.

The Impossibility of Reparations

Considering the single most important question about racial restitution:
How would it work?

DAVID FRUM

JUNE 3, 2014

<https://www.theatlantic.com/business/archive/2014/06/the-impossibility-of-reparations/372041/>



ANDREA IZZOTTI/SHUTTERSTOCK

The United States government launched its reparations program to African Americans in autumn of 1969. Originally known as “the Philadelphia plan,” the program set quotas for black employment in construction trades. Over the next decades, such quotas would spread from industry to industry, and would expand into higher education and public contracting.

The plan is usually credited to the Nixon administration. Sometimes it’s even described as a secret scheme to split the Democratic base. The history is more prosaic. The plan originated under the Johnson administration, following President Johnson’s pledge in his 1965 Howard University speech to seek racial equality as a result, not merely as a theory.

In this month’s *Atlantic*, Ta-Nehisi Coates makes an eloquent case for restitution to black Americans, not only for wrongs done before 1865, but as much or more for wrongs done in the century of segregation that followed. Yet this powerful essay explicitly disavows any

consideration of the single most important question about the restitution he has in mind: How would it work?

The affirmative action experience since 1969 offers some insights into what is likely to happen next:

1) The program will expand to additional groups.

Within only a very few months of the implementation of Philadelphia plan, preferences of various kinds were extended to women, Hispanics, and other groups. With any program of reparations, likewise, other claimants will come forward. If African Americans are due payment for slavery and subjugation, what about Native Americans, who lost a whole continent? What about Mexican-Americans, who were deprived by the Mexican-American war of the right to migrate into half their former country? Japanese Americans, interned during World War II? Chinese Americans, the victims of coolie labor and the Oriental Exclusion Acts? Members of these groups may concede that they were not maltreated in the same way as African Americans—and may not be entitled to exactly the same consideration. But if black Americans are entitled to almost a trillion dollars in compensation (Coates suggests a figure of \$34 billion a year “for a decade or two”) surely these other maltreated groups must be entitled at least to something?

Coates’s essay is built on an unstated assumption that America’s racial composition is essentially binary, a white majority that inflicts inequality; a black minority that suffers inequality. Others enter into his imagination only at the hazy edges: “One cannot escape the question by hand-waving at the past, disavowing the acts of one’s ancestors, nor by citing a recent date of ancestral immigration. ... A nation outlives its generations.”

But the “others” are now 25 percent of the nation and rising fast. Does the Fujianese delivery man pedaling through the brownstones of Fort Greene owe a debt to the people whose food he carries? How much? The reparations idea—so long politically outlandish—has become thinkable today because of the gathering power of the Obama political coalition. But nothing would blow that coalition apart faster than the internal redistribution Coates contemplates from some constituencies to others. And if the idea is that the newest arrivals to America will be persuaded to accept paying reparations as a cost of immigration—or that new Americans can be cajoled to pay a symbolic something because the bulk of the burden will be carried by the dwindling white majority (a majority that already feels ever more culturally insecure and economically beset)—well, that’s a prescript for an even more dangerous political explosion.

2) The question of who qualifies will become ever more contested and embittered.

Under today’s racial preference rules, a nephew of the King of Spain or the daughter of the chairman of the biggest bank in Chile would both qualify for Hispanic preferences if they resided in the United States. Harvard can (and does) meet its African American

diversity requirements with the children of recent African immigrants, whose families never experienced slavery or segregation in this country.

The problem of “who qualifies?” is explosive enough with hiring and admissions preferences. As the benefits at stake expand to the vast dimensions urged by Coates, the question will become more explosive yet. Does a mixed race person qualify? How mixed? What about recent immigrants from Africa or the West Indies? What about future immigrants? What about illegal immigrants from Africa who subsequently gain legalization—would amnesty come with a check attached?

3) Side effects will be large and unexpected.

Affirmative action characterizes some parts of the American economy more strongly than others, and in particular the public sector more than the private sector. This pervading fact has shaped the growth of the black middle class. Black Americans are 30 percent more likely than non-blacks to work in the public sector, where they earn higher wages relative to whites than they do in private employment. This strategy brought security to many black families in the years between 1970 and 2008.

But the strategy came at a cost.

First, the strategy tethered black economic advancement to the growth of government. That growth has become ever more fiercely contested in recent years. Since 2008, it has abruptly halted and reversed.

Second, the strategy detoured talented people away from the higher risks and rewards of the private sector, and especially from entrepreneurship. Black Americans are less than half as likely as white to own their own businesses.

A reparations plan is likely to prove even more distorting.

If paid to individuals as an income stream, reparations would dis-incentivize work.

If paid to individuals as a lump sum, reparations would expose one of America’s least financially sophisticated populations to predatory practices that would make subprime lending seem socially responsible by contrast.

If paid to institutions or collective entities ... well, let’s look at that under another header.

4) The program will work severe inequities.

Affirmative action’s quirks and injustices are notorious. But they will be nothing compared to the strange consequences of a reparations program. Not all black people are poor. Not all non-black people are rich. Does Oprah have a housecleaner? Who changes the diapers of Beyonce’s baby? Who files Herman J. Russell’s taxes? Will their wages be taxed and the proceeds redirected to their employers?

Within the target population, will all receive the same? Same per person, or same per family? Or will there be adjustment for need? How will need be measured? Will convicted criminals be eligible? If not, the program will exclude perhaps one million African Americans. If yes, the program would potentially tax victims of rape and families of the murdered for the benefit of their assailants.

And if reparations were somehow delivered communally and collectively, disparities of wealth and power and political influence within black America will become even more urgent. Simply put, when government spends money on complex programs, the people who provide the service usually end up with much more sway over the spending than the spending's intended beneficiaries. The poorer the beneficiaries, the more powerfully this rule holds—and it has held strongest of all in programs intended to aid the black poor. The District of Columbia public schools have excelled at delivering stable jobs to their unionized employees. They have failed their students.

5) The legitimacy of the project will rapidly fade.

Affirmative action ranks among the least popular thing that U.S. governments do. When surveyed, white Americans crushingly reject race preferences, Hispanic Americans object by a margin of 2 to 1, and black Americans are almost evenly divided, with only the slightest plurality in favor.

Now imagine how Americans will feel when what is redistributed by racial calculus is not university admissions or workplace promotions but actual, foldable cash.

Ta-Nehisi Coates anticipates this trouble by suggesting that reparations might be paid not to individuals but collectively to African Americans as a group. He favorably cites the example of German reparations to the state of Israel after World War II.

But the state of Israel was a sovereign, elected by a democratic process. Few in the Jewish world doubted that Israel could and did act for the Jewish people as a whole. Black Americans, however, do not have a state of their own. If reparations are deemed some kind of collective debt to black Americans as a group, rather than to black Americans as individuals, then the question will arise: Who decides how this money will be distributed? Some kind of National Endowment for Black America? Chosen how? Accountable to whom?

Harvard Law professor Charles Ogletree suggests widening the concept of reparations even further, into a national "program of job training and public works that takes racial justice as its mission but includes the poor of all races." In that case, reparations would cease to be a new program, but would become instead a new argument in favor of the preexisting policy preferences of the left wing of the Democratic party. Earlier in his article, Coates quotes with seeming disdain the radio host Rush Limbaugh's disparagement of the Affordable Care Act as a form of "reparations." But aren't Limbaugh and Ogletree more or less in agreement here?

Coates dismisses all these questions and so many others. He suggests the country first enact Rep. John Conyers' Reparations Bill and then open a discussion about how reparations would work. But committing yourself to a solution before you have any idea whether such a solution is workable—or, rather, in defiance of pretty strong reasons that your solution is utterly unworkable—is not a responsible reaction to America's racial dilemmas.

Instead, we'll be all too likely to repeat once more the sad pattern of so many civil rights initiatives: the bold announcement, the raised hopes, the unexpected difficulties, the suppression of open discussion of those difficulties, the ossifying of the project into bureaucracy, the realization of failure, the discovery of the political impossibility of reforming or repairing the failure.

* * *

In his Lincoln Memorial address of 1963, Martin Luther King spoke of the words of the Declaration of Independence as "promissory note" on which the nation had defaulted. He meant this as a metaphor, not a financial analysis. Ta-Nehisi Coates has taken him literally. King understood, however, that the wrongs of which he spoke could not be redressed with money (or money alone), and that is even more true today than in 1963.

A real-world example:

Young black Americans spend on average 4.5 hours more per day with electronic media (notably television, video games, and other forms of online entertainment) than do their white counterparts, for a total in excess of 13 hours. While all young people spend a lot of time in front of screens, black youth watch far and away the most television: almost 3.5 hours per day, or an hour and a quarter more than young whites. Almost 80 percent of black youth say they "usually" eat meals in front of a TV.

The disparity is growing wider, not narrowing, as more forms of electronic media become available. The disparity shrinks, but does not disappear, with education and income. The best predictor of how much TV a child will watch is not whether he or she lives in a single or two-parent family. It is not family income or wealth. It is race: Even the most advantaged black youth spend 90 minutes more per day with electronic media than do their white contemporaries. It won't surprise you to hear that heavy use of electronic media correlates with all kinds of bad outcomes, from obesity to poor school performance. (Across all races, only about 16-20 minutes per day of screentime is connected to schoolwork.)

It's not difficult to draw a chain of causation from the exploitation so stirringly described by Ta-Nehisi Coates to the TV-dependence of black youth in the 2010s. In this case, however, detailing the cause does not reveal the remedy. To realize their full potential, those kids must watch less TV. No plausible government program can shut down their

devices for them. That decision—like almost every decision that leads to self- and collective improvement—must come from within families and within individuals.

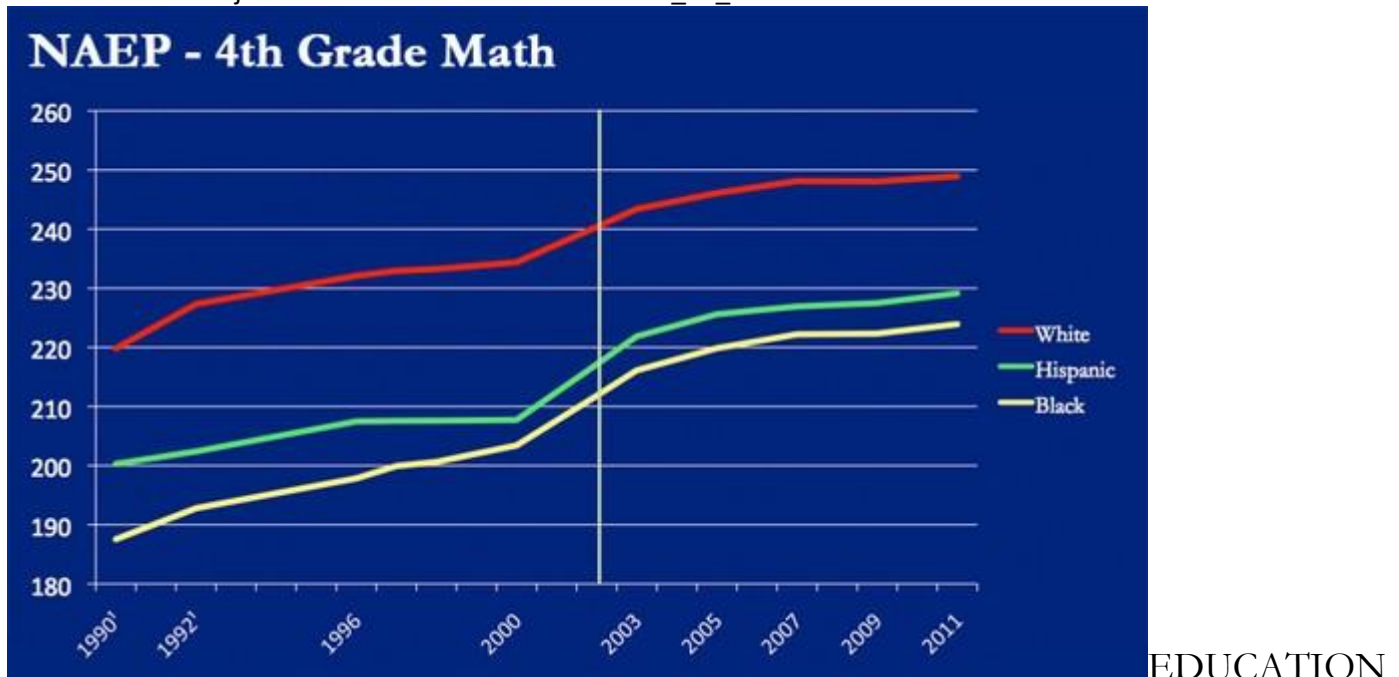
The great white lie America tells itself is that the passage of civil-rights laws in the 1960s and '70s lifted the burden of the racial past. But racial subjugation imposed over 350 years could not and was not alleviated over a single generation. Today's white Americans inherit financial assets and human capital accumulated over a long span of time—and very possibly by robbing or cheating victims of color.

In refuting that lie, however, Ta-Nehisi Coates advances an error that also does harm: that black Americans can build their future by debunking white Americans' illusions about their past. It does not work that way. Racism may have turned the TV set on. Anti-racism won't turn the TV set off.

The government of the United States could trace the genealogy of every white family and send a massive bill to the descendants of every slaveholder and every slumlord who did business from 1619 through 1968. It could redistribute that money in a princely lump sum. But that money won't change unhealthy dietary patterns, or enhance language skills, or teach the habits on which thriving communities are built.

Germany and Israel may not be historically exact precedent for Coates's plan. The more exact precedent may be the sudden surge of oil wealth into the Middle East after 1973. Nations that had always felt themselves cheated of their due suddenly saw their incomes triple and quadruple. Yet the nations did not progress. The wealth of nations is built on their human capital—and the oil income not only failed to enrich them, but oftentimes incentivized behavior that left (or will leave) those nations in many ways worse off than before.

The human qualities that advance a community and a nation were defiantly acquired by black Americans themselves under conditions of horrifying adversity. Their development has accelerated as equality has come nearer to view.



NEXT

Disparities remain, of course. Coates challenges all Americans to remember where those disparities came from—and to think hard what is owed to those on the wrong end of them.

What I'm talking about is more than recompense for past injustices—more than a handout, a payoff, hush money, or a reluctant bribe. What I'm talking about is a national reckoning that would lead to spiritual renewal. Reparations would mean the end of scarfing hot dogs on the Fourth of July while denying the facts of our heritage. Reparations would mean the end of yelling “patriotism” while waving a Confederate flag. Reparations would mean a revolution of the American consciousness, a reconciling of our self-image as the great democratizer with the facts of our history.

If “reparations” means remembrance and repentance for the wrongs of the past, then let's have reparations. Americans tell a too-flattering version of their national story. They treat slavery as ancillary rather than essential. They forget that the work of slaves paid this country's import bill from the 17th century until 1860. They do not acknowledge that the “freedom” championed by slaveholding Founding Fathers, including the author of the Declaration of Independence, included the freedom to own other human beings as property. They can no longer notice how slavery is stitched into every line of the Constitution and was supported by every single early national institution. The self-reckoning we see in Germany and other European countries does not come easily to Americans—and is still outright rejected by many.

If “reparations” means intensifying the nation's commitment to equal opportunity for all its people—and most especially for the descendants of those once enslaved—then (again) let's have reparations. Better schools, more jobs, some form of universal health coverage, an immigration policy that does not exert endless downward pressure on the wages of

America's least skilled workers, improved nutrition especially in early childhood, higher taxes on alcohol, more effective and less punitive enforcement of drug laws—there's a program of group betterment awaiting the right advocates at the right time.

But if “reparations” means what most Americans reasonably interpret it to mean—cash flowing from some Americans to others in race-conscious ways meant to redress the racial wrongs of the past—then it's a disastrous idea for all groups in society.

And if, when you advocate reparations, you aren't sure which of the above things it does mean, then your advocacy should be postponed until you are.

We want to hear what you think about this article. Submit a letter to the editor or write to letters@theatlantic.com.

DAVID FRUM *is a staff writer at The Atlantic and the author of Trumpocalypse: Restoring American Democracy (2020). In 2001 and 2002, he was a speechwriter for President George W. Bush.*

A 'Forgotten History' Of How The U.S. Government Segregated America

May 3, 2017 12:47 PM ET

Heard on [Fresh Air](#)

<https://www.npr.org/2017/05/03/526655831/a-forgotten-history-of-how-the-u-s-government-segregated-america>



[TERRY GROSS](#)



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Federal housing policies created after the Depression ensured that African-Americans and other people of color were left out of the new suburban communities — and pushed instead into urban housing projects, such as Detroit's Brewster-Douglass towers.

Paul Sancya/AP

In 1933, faced with a housing shortage, the federal government began a program explicitly designed to increase — and segregate — America's housing stock. Author Richard Rothstein says the housing programs begun under the New Deal were tantamount to a "state-sponsored system of segregation."



RACE

Historian Says Don't 'Sanitize' How Our Government Created Ghettos

The government's efforts were "primarily designed to provide housing to white, middle-class, lower-middle-class families," he says. African-Americans and other people of color were left out of the new suburban communities — and pushed instead into urban housing projects.

Rothstein's new book, *The Color of Law*, examines the local, state and federal housing policies that mandated segregation. He notes that the Federal Housing Administration, which was established in 1934, furthered the segregation efforts by refusing to insure mortgages in and near African-American neighborhoods — a policy known as "[redlining](#)." At the same time, the FHA was subsidizing builders who were mass-producing entire subdivisions for whites — with the requirement that none of the homes be sold to African-Americans.

Article continues after sponsor message



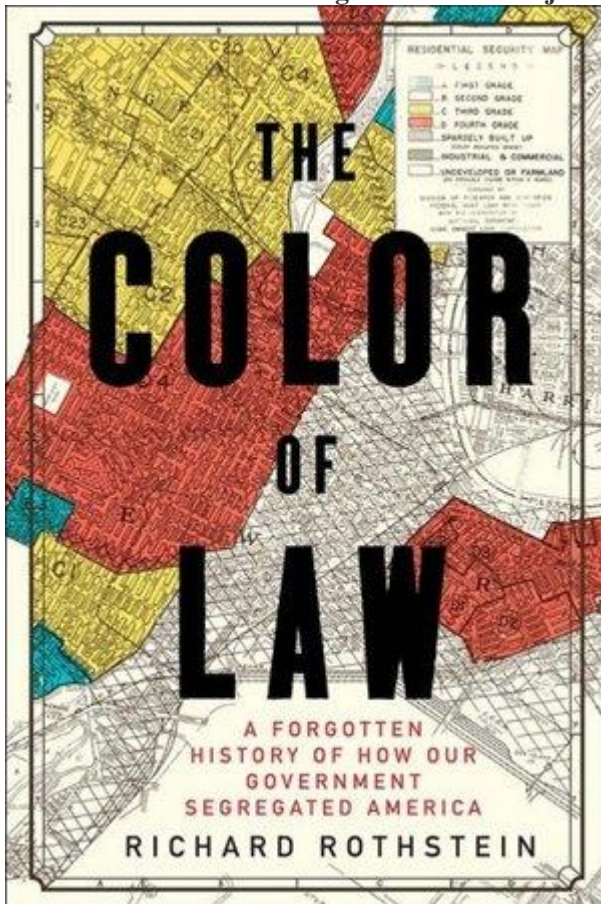
CODE SWITCH

Everyone Pays A Hefty Price For Segregation, Study Says

Rothstein says these decades-old housing policies have had a lasting effect on American society. "The segregation of our metropolitan areas today leads ... to stagnant inequality, because families are much less able to be upwardly mobile when they're living in segregated neighborhoods where opportunity is absent," he says. "If we want greater equality in this society, if we want a lowering of the hostility between police and young African-American men, we need to take steps to desegregate."

Interview Highlights

On how the Federal Housing Administration justified discrimination



The Color of Law

A Forgotten History of How Our Government Segregated America

by Richard Rothstein

Hardcover, 345 pages

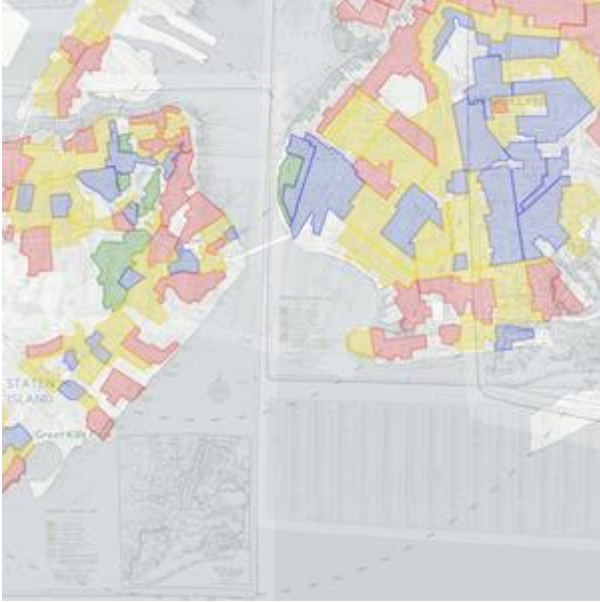
The Federal Housing Administration's justification was that if African-Americans bought homes in these suburbs, or even if they bought homes near these suburbs, the property values of the homes they were insuring, the white homes they were insuring, would decline. And therefore their loans would be at risk.

There was no basis for this claim on the part of the Federal Housing Administration. In fact, when African-Americans tried to buy homes in all-white neighborhoods or in mostly white neighborhoods, property values rose because African-Americans were more willing to pay more for properties than whites were, simply because their housing supply was so restricted and they had so many fewer choices. So the rationale that the Federal Housing Administration used was never based on any kind of study. It was never based on any reality.

On how federal agencies used redlining to segregate African-Americans

The term "redlining" ... comes from the development by the New Deal, by the federal government of maps of every metropolitan area in the country. And those maps were color-coded by first the Home Owners Loan Corp. and then the Federal Housing Administration and then adopted by the Veterans Administration, and these color codes were designed to indicate where it was safe to insure mortgages. And anywhere where African-Americans lived, anywhere where African-Americans lived nearby were colored red to indicate to appraisers that these neighborhoods were too risky to insure mortgages.

On the FHA manual that explicitly laid out segregationist policies



THE TWO-WAY

[Interactive Redlining Map Zooms In On America's History Of Discrimination](#)

It was in something called the *Underwriting Manual* of the Federal Housing Administration, which said that "incompatible racial groups should not be permitted to live in the same communities." Meaning that loans to African-Americans could not be insured.

In one development ... in Detroit ... the FHA would not go ahead, during World War II, with this development unless the developer built a 6-foot-high wall, cement wall, separating his development from a nearby African-American neighborhood to make sure that no African-Americans could even walk into that neighborhood.

The *Underwriting Manual* of the Federal Housing Administration recommended that highways be a good way to separate African-American from white neighborhoods. So this was not a matter of law, it was a matter of government regulation, but it also wasn't hidden, so it can't be claimed that this was some kind of "de facto" situation. Regulations that are written in law and published ... in the *Underwriting Manual* are as much a de jure unconstitutional expression of government policy as something written in law.

On the long-term effects of African-Americans being prohibited from buying homes in suburbs and building equity
Today African-American incomes on average are about 60 percent of average white incomes. But African-American wealth is about 5 percent of white wealth. Most middle-class families in this country gain their wealth from the equity they have in their homes. So this enormous difference between a 60 percent income ratio and a 5 percent wealth ratio is almost entirely attributable to federal housing policy implemented through the 20th century.

African-American families that were prohibited from buying homes in the suburbs in the 1940s and '50s and even into the '60s, by the Federal Housing Administration, gained none of the equity appreciation that whites gained. So ... the Daly City development south of San Francisco or Levittown or any of the others in between across the country, those homes in the late 1940s and 1950s sold for about twice national median income. They were affordable to working-class families with an FHA or VA mortgage. African-Americans were equally able to afford those homes as whites but were prohibited from buying them. Today those homes sell for \$300,000 [or] \$400,000 at the minimum, six, eight times national median income. ...

So in 1968 we passed the Fair Housing Act that said, in effect, "OK, African-Americans, you're now free to buy homes in Daly City or Levittown" ... but it's an empty promise because those homes are no longer affordable to the families that could've afforded them when whites were buying into those suburbs and gaining the equity and the wealth that followed from that.



NPR ED

[How The Systemic Segregation Of Schools Is Maintained By 'Individual Choices'](#)

The white families sent their children to college with their home equities; they were able to take care of their parents in old age and not depend on their children. They're able to bequeath wealth to their children. None of those advantages accrued to African-Americans, who for the most part were prohibited from buying homes in those suburbs.

On how housing projects went from being for white middle- and lower-middle-class families to being predominantly black and poor

Public housing began in this country for civilians during the New Deal and it was an attempt to address a housing shortage; it wasn't a welfare program for poor people. During the Depression, no housing construction was going on. Middle-class families, working-class families were losing their homes during the Depression when they became unemployed and so there were many unemployed middle-class, working-class white families and this was the constituency that the federal government was most interested in. And so the federal government began a program of building public housing for whites only in cities across the country. The liberal instinct of some Roosevelt administration officials led them to build some projects for African-Americans as well, but they were always separate projects; they were not integrated. ...

The white projects had large numbers of vacancies; black projects had long waiting lists. Eventually it became so conspicuous that the public housing authorities in the federal government opened up the white-designated projects to African-Americans, and they filled with African-Americans. At the same time, industry was leaving the cities, African-Americans were becoming poorer in those areas, the projects became projects for poor people, not for working-class people. They became subsidized, they hadn't been subsidized before. ... And so they became vertical slums that we came to associate with public housing. ...

The vacancies in the white projects were created primarily by the Federal Housing Administration program to suburbanize America, and the Federal Housing Administration subsidized mass production builders to create subdivisions that were "white-only" and they subsidized the families who were living in the white housing projects as well as whites who were living elsewhere in the central city to move out of the central cities and into these white-only suburbs. So it was the Federal Housing Administration that depopulated public housing of white families, while the public housing authorities were charged with the responsibility of housing African-Americans who were increasingly too poor to pay the full cost of their rent.

Radio producers Sam Briger and Thea Chaloner and Web producers Bridget Bentz and Molly Seavy-Nesper contributed to this story.

Correction May 3, 2017

A previous version of this story incorrectly spelled Daly City as Daley.

Men and Women Use Gender Stereotypes to Their Advantage, While Ostensibly Rejecting Them

By Jessica A. Jordan

University of Florida

Abstract

System justification theory posits that people endorse the *status quo* because they need to view the world as fair and legitimate. Current research proposes system justification as an explanation for widespread support of gender stereotypes. This thesis evaluates an alternate theory: individuals utilize gender stereotypes to their advantage by reaping the benefits, while simultaneously rejecting the stereotype as not truly applying to them. Participants were asked to complete a survey using the Flanagan Critical Incident Technique to evaluate the existence and occurrence rate of these kinds of behaviors. Female participants were also administered the Conformity to Feminine Norms Inventory and male participants were administered the Conformity to Masculine Norms Inventory, to assess their level of conformity to gender norms.

Results showed that 25.9% of men and 51.7% women reported knowingly using gender stereotypes to gain a social advantage, while simultaneously telling themselves they do not truly believe they fit the stereotype. The study also found that the men and women who recalled such an incident also scored the highest in gender norm conformity.

These findings paint a picture of individuals who

- (1) use gender stereotypes to their social advantage while
- (2) telling themselves that the stereotype does not apply to them, yet
- (3) nonetheless appearing to espouse it more than those who do not use gender stereotypes to their advantage.

It is commonly understood by scholars of gender (e.g., MacKinnon, 2005), as well as most non-scholars, that society places men and women on unequal footing, with differing and limiting expectations of each gender. Men are supposed to remain strong in all situations, and unable to talk about their emotions; women are expected to be nurturers who cannot control their emotions. Gender stereotypes are abundant in society, dictating what men and women should and should not do, how they should and should not be. They are prescriptions for our actions (Prentice & Carranza, 2002,) which when followed are rewarded; when disobeyed, punished (Prentice & Carranza, 2002; Rudman & Glick, 1999.).

Gender Stereotypes as Prescriptions

Early in this work, prescriptive gender stereotypes were analyzed using the Bem Sex Role Inventory (BSRI; see Bem, 1981 for a review). This measure identified characteristics that are socially desirable for each gender. For example, society prefers women who are polite, tender, and sympathetic of others. In contrast, it is more desirable for men to be ambitious, assertive, and have a strong personality (Bem, 1981). In reaction to the presumption that the characteristics highlighted in gender stereotyping are socially desirable, a number of studies produced evidence of socially undesirable gender traits (e.g., Bryson & Corey, 1977; Spence, Helmreich, & Holahan, 1979). These traits are assigned to the gender in which that role is expected, such as gullible and weak for women, and arrogant and insensitive for men (Prentice and Carranza, 2002).

.....

Results

Results confirm my first hypothesis, which was that an identifiable subset of participants would describe specific experiences recalled from their own lives in which they garnered a personal benefit by socially accepting a gender role stereotype, while nonetheless rejecting the stereotype privately. Over half of female participants (51.7%) and over a quarter of male participants (25.9%) were able to provide description of an incident that judges agreed fit the criteria (see Table 1 for a list of incidents and their frequencies).

What follows are two examples, one for a female participant and one for a male participant. Female: "Another common stereotype is that "females are weak or not physically able to compete against males". The truth is, when I was in the Sea Cadets as described above, I was in peak physical form and could out-do many males. However, many times I chose not to because I don't enjoy working out. So even though I KNEW I could do more of the exercise, I would just do the minimum and allow people to think I was a "normal female - can't do anything other than the minimum". This was easier for me, and fulfilled their stereotype, so even though I rejected their stereotype, everyone was happy."

Male: "When discussing previous sexual encounters with some friends, I mentioned that I had experienced a few "one night stands". Although I enjoy exclusive relationships, everyone in the group didn't think much of it because it is acceptable for men to have casual sex more often than women. I felt like I had tricked my friends into thinking I am someone who I'm not. However, it did allow for easy manipulation of group dynamics."

Despite the fact that I made no predictions with regard to differences in participants' ability to recall such experiences as a function of participant gender, race, ethnicity, marital status, or age, a statistically significant chi-square indicates that the incident recall pattern differed significantly for men and women, with women more likely than men to provide a critical incident,

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Though statistically significant, results testing my second hypothesis (that a respondent's ability to describe an incident of using a gender stereotype to his or her advantage while privately rejecting it would correlate negatively with the respondent's overall CMNI/CFNI score), did not support the hypothesis (see Table 4 for CFNI/CMNI overall means and subscale means). In fact, I found the pattern opposite to what I predicted: Participants reporting a qualifying critical incident were significantly more likely to report conformity to gender roles than those not reporting an incident, with those reporting a nonqualifying incident falling in between, $F(2, 310) = 9.34, p < .0001$ (No incident recalled $M = 117.47$ ($SD = 16.48$); Nonqualifying incident recalled $M = 122.80$ ($SD = 12.88$); Qualifying incident recalled $M = 125.79$ ($SD = 13.84$, see Figure 1).

Rather than showing evidence of rejecting a traditional stereotype while re-purposing it to gain a personal advantage, these findings suggest that perhaps they internalized the stereotype more than they realized. This pattern occurred for the same for men and women. An analysis of variance (ANOVA) testing the gender by incident interaction on gender role conformity scores revealed a statistically nonsignificant effect, $F(2, 307) = 0.71, p < .50$. This finding indicates that the relationship between incident recall and gender role conformity did not differ for men and women.

To gain insight about this surprising result, I reanalyzed participants' qualifying incident responses for whether another person applied the stereotype to the participant or whether the participant applied the stereotype to him-

or herself. Consistent with the finding that those with qualifying incidents had more deeply internalized traditional gender roles than others, in 60.4% of the incidents (90 of 149 cases) the participant applied the stereotype to him- or herself. The incidents of self-application differed for men and women, but not significantly, $X^2(1, N = 149) = 1.11, p < .30$: Males 42.9% (6 of 14 cases), Females 62.2% (84 of 135 cases).

Discussion

Confirming my first hypothesis, this study shows that both men and women reported using gender stereotypes to their advantage while rejecting the stereotypes as descriptive of themselves. Although I made no predictions about gender differences in reporting this type of incident, I found women to be approximately twice as likely as men to recall an event of using a gender stereotype to one's own benefit while rejecting the stereotype as not applying to their person. Despite this large difference in reporting rate, over 25% of men also produced a qualifying incident. There were no significant differences in incident recall as a function of race, ethnicity, marital status, or age).

My second hypothesis predicted that participants who did identify an incident would have lower conformity ratings to their gender norms. On the contrary, I found participants who gave qualifying incidents scored higher on conformity ratings and thus were more likely to conform to the norms for their gender. This relationship gender role conformity effect did not differ by gender, despite the fact that more women overall were able to produce an incident. This link between incident recall and conformity to gender norms is consistent with the notion that women and men have internalized the gender norms as true of them and are only superficially rejecting the stereotype, perhaps only doing so to avoid the conclusion that they are conformists. These findings are consistent with earlier research by Jost et al., (2004) and Laurin et al. (2011), who that found that individuals who engaged in stereotyping truly internalized those stereotypical beliefs.

Regarding my research questions of whether or not the CFNI and CMNI subscales reveal patterns differing from the overall conformity pattern, I found no statistically significant differences when I adjusted for the inflation of family-wise error resulting from conducting multiple statistical tests. This finding suggests that the overall effect was not driven by scores on a subset of the subscales and that the effect is best viewed as a general gender role conformity effect. Perhaps future studies could explore whether certain subscales were better predictor of specific subsets of recalled incidents.

Comparing the group of extra credit participants to the volunteer group, I found the extra credit participants to be twice as likely to produce a qualifying incident, twice as likely to produce a non-qualifying incident, and only one third as likely to produce no incident. This may be due to the lack of incentive for the volunteer participants to put forth effort to recall and relate an incident. Alternately, these differences may reflect differences in introspective abilities or in the ability to understand what was being asked of them, between college students taking social science classes and non-students.

Further analyses comparing the extra credit group with the volunteers found both groups to be predominantly female, though there was a significantly larger proportion of females in the extra credit condition. Analysis of the two samples separately revealed that gender differences in incident recall were statistically significant in the extra credit group and probably would have been statistically significant in the volunteer group had the sample been larger, with more qualifying incidents. Finally, I found the volunteer sample to be older than the extra credit sample, to conform less to gender norms, to be less likely to be Hispanic/Latino, more likely to be married, and more likely to be white versus non-white races combined.

The surprising result, that individuals who conform to gender norms are more likely to use a gender stereotype to their advantage while rejecting the stereotype as not applying to them, suggests an act of self-deception. We now know these individuals are conforming to gender norms yet simultaneously telling themselves

they are not. This reflects an unwillingness to identify with a socially undesirable characteristic. For example, many women in the study cited “women are weak” as the stereotype used to avoid heavy labor. As Prentice and Carranza (2002) have described, weakness is a gender-relaxed proscription for women, meaning it is a socially undesirable traits that is simply allowed more in women than men. While allowable in a certain gender, gender-relaxed proscriptions are still not looked upon favorably by society. Thus, this research the supports the view that individuals who used a gender-relaxed proscription would not wish to identify with the characteristic, lest they feel the weight of the social judgment ingrained them.

Prentice and Carranza’s categories of socially desirable traits are supported by the gender stereotypes men and women did and did not report using to their advantage in this study. For example, no men attempted to say “men are weak” to avoid labor. Weakness is a gender-intensified proscription, meaning it is socially undesirable, and even less desirable for that gender. The fact that women used weakness as an excuse and men did not demonstrates that men and women are aware of the acceptable stereotypes for their gender and what characteristics will gain them an advantage. No responses indicated the attempt failed, which suggests these individuals are adept at doing this.

The results also revealed that women used hostile sexist stereotypes (Glick & Fisk, 1996) more than benevolent sexist stereotypes. Women reported using hostile (e.g., weak, bad drivers, bad at math, stupid) stereotypes to an advantage 91.4% of the time. This finding is inconsistent with the literature. According to a study by Kilianski and Rudman (1998), who analyzed participants’ approval of a benevolently sexist profile and a hostilely sexist profile, individuals approved of benevolent sexism more than hostile sexism. Thus, one should expect to see the endorsement of benevolent sexist stereotypes more than hostile sexist stereotypes, given the difference in individuals’ approval. It could be argued the women in the current study did not truly endorse the hostile stereotypes; however, if that were true one would have seen lower scores in gender norm conformity. Although it also possible that women use benevolent stereotypes just as often, but they simply don’t wish to reject them. Kilianski and Rudman did find mild approval of benevolent sexism among participants; perhaps women are comfortable using benevolently sexist stereotypes to describe themselves. Another consideration is the scientific support for these stereotypes. I found no scientific research that shows it is imperative for men to carry heavy objects for women; however, the average man is physically stronger than the average woman. This could describe why women choose to nominate the stereotype “women are weak” over the stereotype “women should be taken care of” to gain an advantage. In the case of most of the stereotypes nominated by female participants, the woman could have said the stereotype “women should be taken care of” to achieve the same result. Nevertheless, only one woman indicated using “women should be taken care of” to gain an advantage (have her boyfriend shut a window for her) and she nominated it in conjunction with “women are weak.” This phenomenon perhaps illustrates a conscious or subconscious instinct that men are more likely to respond to something they “know” (i.e., women are weak) rather than something they’ve been told (i.e., women should be taken care of.)

This study reveals interesting insights into the propagation of gender stereotypes. In these events, the person gaining the advantage is either telling the stereotype as truth to someone else or accepting, and thus confirming, the stereotype as truth. One female respondent said, “The stereotype of females being weaker than men was applied to me. I was carrying a lot of things and a guy offered to help. At first I resisted, but he insisted to carry at least one of the packages for me. I was thinking, ‘I don’t really need the help, I’m not weak, but this does help me out a little.’ I more so allowed him to carry the package to allow him to be nice towards me.” While she did not tell the man, “you should help me because women are weak,” she encouraged him to continue believing women are weak by accepting his help without correcting him. Similarly, one man reported, “About 2 or 3 weeks ago I was at home and I live with 3 girls. We had a party the night before and they were all deciding who would clean what and when I walked in and asked if I could help they said no because they didn’t think guys were very good at cleaning. I

remember thinking that was funny since I'm cleaner than all 3 of them, so I accepted their stereotype so I wouldn't have to clean but I knew that that stereotype was not true for me."

Surprisingly, the individual applied the stereotype to him or herself 60% of the time. For example, one woman described, "...I rejected the stereotype the entire time I was doing the project with the guys because I knew that I was capable of building something with them. However, I did use the stereotype to my advantage because whenever they would ask for minor help I would say that I was just a girl who didn't know how to use tools, and I also told my teacher this when he asked how I had contributed to the project." This suggests the propagation of stereotyping is done by the very targets of the stereotype. The finding that individuals apply these stereotypes to themselves in many cases instead of simply going along with other people offering to do things for them shows individuals are well aware of their actions and what is happening. This phenomenon in many cases appears to be constructed deliberately to gain a specific advantage, especially in the case of women. Further supporting this conclusion, the study shows six cases in which women nominated two gender stereotypes to gain one advantage, effectively employing a backup stereotype to ensure securing the advantage. One woman admitted, "I've used the women are weak or don't know how to use tools properly in order to get out of doing yard work/hard work." By calling upon multiple stereotypes, she leaves no room for argument against her feminine inability to be useful.

Some gender differences were found in not only the rates of incident recall but the kind of incident recalled. As previously stated, women use gender stereotypes to their advantage about twice as often as men. I also found women were with men (as opposed to women or gender unspecific groups) 85.9% of time they used a gender stereotype to their advantage. In comparison, men only recalled two incidents that only involved women and an additional two incidents that involved groups that specified at least one woman being present. In only one incident reported by a man was there only one person involved; in all other instances the advantage was gained over a group of two or more.

For example, one man recalled,

"I personally took advantage of the "men aren't good with emotions" stereotype. Personally, I am very aware of my emotions and can sometimes be too quick to react based on them. So for me this doesn't apply. However, there was a chance for me to be on an advisory board and they were searching for candidates, so I applied. I found out they were predominantly searching for males because the members on the board were too emotional, rash, and weren't as rational as the chair of the board would have liked. Due to this they were searching for males based on the assumption that they are more level-headed and not as expressive or aware of their emotions. Though I am in-touch with my emotions I used this image to my advantage and in the interview displayed myself as emotionally detached from high tension situations and level-headed. This ended up in me receiving the chair position on the advisory board. So I benefited from the stereotype though I personally did not fit that idea."

Thus, while men still report experiencing situations where they needed to use a stereotype to gain an advantage, the advantages gained are almost never over a woman. This is consistent with the understanding that men are dominant over women in society (e.g., MacKinnon, 2005, p. 92). Men do not need to gain any advantages over women, as society already affords them sufficient power. On the other hand, this study shows another avenue for women, the subordinate sex, to garner an advantage not otherwise given.

The results of this study are in some ways reminiscent of earlier work on self-silencing (Jack & Dill, 1992.) Self-silencing involves the silencing of one's own beliefs and preferences in order to gain and maintain a romantic partner. Similarly, in these data individuals silence their own beliefs about themselves ("I'm not really weak," "I'm not really promiscuous") in order to gain an advantage, such as avoiding heavy labor or public disapproval. Future

research could explore the similarities and differences between self-silencing and the findings of the present study. What the two appear to have in common is a tactical suppression of the truth about oneself in order to gain a social advantage. Ironically, the self-silencing literature suggests that suppression of self produces higher levels of depressive affect, just as my findings suggest the possibility that suppression of self with regard to not really conforming to rigid gender roles may increase internalization of the very gender roles participants were trying to use but not internalize. In other words, the tactic in both cases may produce an unintended and negative consequence.

The differences between the two samples may be due the different recruitment methods or the different inducements for participating. The extra credit sample was given an incentive of extra credit in a class to complete the survey, whereas the volunteer sample was given no incentive. Perhaps as a result of a lack of incentive, the volunteer sample may not have put forth as much effort as their extra credit counterparts; this is evidenced by the fact that twice as many extra credit participants gave qualifying and nonqualifying incidents. Future research should explore the impact on data collection of using vs. not using rewards for participation. The samples used were convenience samples. Future investigations should use nationally representative sample.

Conclusion

This study documents a relationship between recalling an incident of using a gender stereotype to your advantage while rejecting it and gender norm conformity. However, it is uncertain if the high level of conformity leads to using gender stereotypes to one's advantage or if recalling an incident of doing so creates (possibly temporary) high levels of conformity. The direction of this causal relationship must be determined in future studies. The purpose of this study was to determine the existence of such incidents, during which an individual uses a gender stereotype to his or her advantage while rejecting it, and to determine the rate of occurrence of this type of incident. I thought that the best method for first recording this phenomenon's existence was Flanagan's Critical Incident Technique. Now that this event has been shown to occur and at a relatively high frequency (44.9% overall and 51.7% for women participants, and 25.9% for male participants), it will be useful in future research to develop a validated scale to measure such incidents. This study has produced hundreds of examples for both men and women, which should prove very useful in future scale construction. Results from this study have also identified other future scientific explorations aimed at understanding more fully how, when, and why individuals use a gender stereotype while ostensibly rejecting it (yet perhaps unwittingly internalizing it). This study has also identified a hosts of situations in which men and women propagated the (often-negative) stereotypes about their own gender. Continuing this line of work is important for two reasons. First, I have identified what I think is a novel use of gender stereotypes in negotiating people's social worlds. Now is the time to move from discovery to deeper understanding. Second, continuing this line of work is important because this novel use of gender stereotypes has significant potential and apparently unforeseen costs for men and especially for women.

Deconstructing Privilege When Students Resist The Journey Back into the Community of Engaged Learners

Extract from: Deconstructing Privilege Chapter 3 edited by Kim Case

By Kim A. Case and Elizabeth R. Cole

Although college faculty sometimes write about their experiences with students' resistance to material in courses that focus on privileges linked to social identity, this literature most often presents a single instructor's perspective (e.g., Atwood, 2010; Chan & Treacy, 1996; Higginbotham, 1996). The following exploration considers themes of resistance across disciplines and multiple instructors' experiences in diversity-themed courses. Drawing on interviews with teachers of such courses aimed at first-year students, as well as on our own teaching experiences, we identify three forms of resistance. In addition, we reflect on alternative ways to understand student resistance and offer strategies for addressing resistant behaviors to bring students back into the broader community of engaged learners. For faculty aiming to teach from an ally perspective, such strategies for working with and through student resistance may aid the goal of creating inclusive classrooms that minimize marginalization of groups and promotes productive dialogues.

We use the term "resistance" to describe the behavior of students who fail to engage with the course content, whether actively or passively. We do not define thoughtful or critical analysis of readings or theoretical perspectives as resistance to learning. Instead, we apply the term to behaviors that dismiss or fail to acknowledge new and disconfirming information or perspectives. In our view, resistance to learning shuts down the conversation rather than encouraging and opening up the broader discussion. Active student resistance often takes the form of arguing by assertion or insisting on the unassailability of personal opinion (i.e., "that's just what I believe") rather than by providing an explicit and reasoned rationale or academic support. In these situations, students often fall back on labels, generalizations, and catch phrases from popular culture to support their views (i.e., describing new information or perspectives as "politically correct"; citing Bible passages as incontrovertible truths; or invoking the views of radio and television pundits as authorities). When students resist learning, they are unwilling to consider alternative perspectives, especially those different from their own.

Research on resistance often involves a taxonomical approach, identifying types of behaviors, personality predispositions, and classroom dynamics. For example, Chan and Treacy (1996) distinguished between active resistance, in which students assertively criticize and disagree with material presented in class, and the more common passive resistance, which may include marginal cooperation, late or incomplete assignments, tardiness to class, or decreased involvement with material. Similarly, Higginbotham (1996) classified resistance into three forms (vocal, silent, and absent) and noted that members of less privileged groups commonly deploy passive types of resistance. Faculty often face difficulty determining whether student behavior resulted from disengagement with the material or some unknown and possibly unrelated reason. As allies in the classroom, instructors must identify ways to effectively address such barriers to learning and promote critical reflection. Most of these typologies describe resistance without insight into the reasons for the resistance or its dynamics.

Jackson (1999) classified resistance based on the psychological source of the barrier, using the phrase "resistance to content" to describe when students feel trapped and respond with anger, resentment, and silence resulting from demands for examination of their own privileges in required courses. Case and Hemmings (2005) also examined resistance to content in response to anti-racist curriculum in a social inequalities course for pre-service teachers. They found that White women in the course used strategies to distance themselves from the topic of racism by remaining silent when class conversations turned to race or when confronted with racism in their personal lives.

In contrast to resistance to content, "character resistance" (Jackson, 1999) refers to a defensive personal coping style (e.g., denial, projection, reaction formation). Case and Hemmings (2005) noted that the White women in their study separated themselves from learning about racism by focusing on the progress made for civil rights, blaming the racist culture or racist people in the past, blaming affirmative action and reverse discrimination in the present, or blaming the marginalized group for the perpetuation of racism. White women also disassociated themselves from racism by proclaiming colorblindness and denying the label of "racist" (Armstrong & Wildman, this volume; Case & Hemmings, 2005; Tatum, 1992; Wise & Case, this volume). These forms of denial and projection illustrate Jackson's (1999) conceptualization of character resistance. Similarly, LaDuke (2009) found that students verbally protested the defining of a relationship between institutional racism and dominant group power for Whites. "Transference resistance" describes students' reactions to instructors, both positive and negative, which interfere with communication and learning (Jackson, 1999). When students' negative emotions lead to shutting down and avoiding dialogue through silence, instructors face the pedagogical challenge of finding ways to bring them back into the community of engaged learners.

Alternatively, Tatum (1992) characterized resistance as a developmental process. Mapping White student resistance to taboo content such as race and racism onto Helms' (1990) racial identity model, Tatum suggested pedagogical attention must be paid to the development of resistance as part of the learning process. She described positive student development as resulting from creating safe classroom spaces, including identity development models in the curriculum, providing opportunities for students to contribute to knowledge creation, and empowering student as agents of social change. By addressing resistance as a developmental process, faculty can better identify effective strategies for maximizing learning.

Yet another strand in the student learning literature focuses on attitude change over the course of a term (Case, 2007a, 2007b; Case & Stewart, 2010; Cole, Case, Rios, & Curtin, 2011; Dessel, Masse, & Walker, this volume; Markowitz, 2005). By comparing students' attitudes at the start and conclusion of the course, these studies explore whether such courses lead students to be more tolerant, democratic, feminist, or likely to engage in activism. Markowitz (2005) found that taking a gender-focused course taught from a feminist pedagogical perspective reduced students' use of dichotomous analysis at the end of the term. Cole et al. (2011) identified student characteristics associated with learning among students taking required race and ethnicity courses in their first year of college. Students exhibited increased understanding of blatant racism, white privilege, and intersectionality, and White students showed decreased endorsement of the Protestant work ethic by the end of the term. However, these general trends cannot address the experiences of individual students who may struggle with and resist content in such courses over the time span of a course.

For example, one faculty member described an African American man who engaged early in the course, but later refused to consider issues concerning the rights of sexual minorities due to his religious beliefs. This particular student "came from nothing," in the instructor's words, and moved into the upper middle class due to his father's career. He was "very active in the class ... and very involved in talking." The faculty member went on to say:

He very much knows the class issues of working-class folks and he's a Black man so really was engaged in race and ethnicity issues. But then when it came to sexual orientation, he was shut down. Religion was very ... you know, is very strong in his life. And that was his kind of defense. Well, you know, "my religion tells me that's wrong and that's it." And he didn't say anything for the class sessions that we were talking about sexual orientation.

Given that we cannot fully know whether his silence manifested from resistance, this student's uncharacteristic silence may potentially indicate lack of familiarity with this form of oppression or possible emotional reactions to learning about a form of oppression he had not yet considered. However, the instructor characterized the student's

silence as defensive, allowing him to disengage from content that challenged his religious background. This behavior was all the more striking given his high level of engagement at other points in the course.

I (Kim) witnessed a conservative Christian student, typically engaged and enthusiastic during class, retreat during a discussion that included a transgender male-to-female guest speaker. Although fully engaged in all previous class sessions, on this particular day she wore a baseball cap, pulled it down over her face, sat back in her chair with arms crossed, and refused to look up or participate in any way for the full three hours of class. This signaled clearly to me that the topic presented a threat to her own worldview; more specifically, to her endorsement of traditional gender roles and the gender binary. As an instructor striving to serve as an ally through my pedagogical approaches, this particular instance of resistant behavior left me uncertain of any path to bring the student back into the community of engaged learners. Given my own gender-conforming, nontransgender, and heterosexual identity, I felt responsible as an ally for creating a learning environment where all students could remain open to new frames of reference and critiquing systems of gender. In these situations, instructors identifying as allies may feel ineffective due to one specific student's behavior.

Interestingly, these examples illustrate the complexity of learning at the site of intersecting identities (Banks, Pliner, & Hopkins, this volume; Ferber & Herrera, this volume) and suggest that protecting one's worldview as a privileged group member is not confined to the left or right politically. Where privileged identities are concerned, students may passively resist along a political continuum depending on their interpretation of whether the content threatens their previous worldviews.

Target Group Resistance

The second theme we identified in instructors' narratives characterized students' resistance on behalf of collective, marginalized identities, which we describe as "target group resistance." Typically this occurred among students living in social locations that reflect less privilege than many of their classmates. Target group resistance may manifest when a particular class topic makes students' oppressed identities salient due to behaviors and comments by faculty or classmates. For example, a gay male student may refuse to participate in a class discussion of same-sex marriage when privileged students present arguments against marriage equality. Latina/o students may skip class on the day when discussions of immigration are scheduled, for fear that they will be assumed by their classmates to be undocumented immigrants or that the faculty member will ask them to speak for their ethnic group.

Examples of target group resistance highlight the way that behaviors adopted by students as ways to survive marginalization on campuses and cope with prejudice can inadvertently become barriers to their learning. A previous student of mine (Kim) shared with me his experiences of feeling tokenized in response to faculty behavior. As a biracial (African American and White) student, he explained that faculty always failed to intervene when classmates expected him to speak on behalf of African Americans. These consistent classroom experiences eventually caused him to retreat into silence and disengagement. Jackson (1999) also described a course in which African American graduate students remained silent during meetings of a course on intercultural therapeutic relationships, yet expressed many thoughts about this topic in their papers. These students later indicated that their silence in the course was a reaction to dealing with hostility from their classmates when discussing such topics in past courses. Similar episodes revealed by our interviewees suggest that sometimes students' resistance comes not from a response to intellectual content, but from their reading of the classroom context as a site of lived intergroup contact that can be unproductive, tokenizing, marginalizing, and threatening.

Keeping the concept of target group resistance in mind may help faculty members anticipate and address passive resistance that students express using absence. For example, in one of my (Kim's) graduate courses addressing intersectionality (see Part II of this volume for more on this concept), an African American female student skipped class on the day we analyzed Black feminist critiques of racism within White feminist scholarship and activism. Similarly, one faculty member interviewed described African American students who did not attend a required

lecture on Black English. The faculty member initially interpreted this as reflecting students' feeling they were already experts on the topic. However, she noted it could also be the case that the topic did not feel safe for them, particularly since the White students in the course expressed very vocal negative reactions to the content.

In these instances, students may feel a need to protect themselves from possibly unsafe classroom environments. Although marginalized students may avoid the classroom or minimize engagement due to potential tokenism, others may do so due to expectations of being stereotyped or disliked.

Although marginalized students' resistance may create obstacles to their own learning and the learning of their classmates, target group resistance may be essential to students' own development in that moment, and potentially to their own self-protection. In fact, initial target group resistance may occupy an important place in healthy development that leads to greater learning later in the course. Without mechanisms for self-protection, marginalized students may retreat altogether by dropping the class, avoiding reading assigned materials, and remaining silent for the entire term.

In addition, resistance in some forms may empower such students to act for social change through transformational resistance. Applying Latina/o critical race theory to student resistance, Solorzano and Delgado Bernal (2001) examined "the concept of resistance to focus on its transformational potential" (p. 308) among Chicana and Chicano students. These students organized walk outs and student strikes and empowered themselves to advocate for culturally relevant studies in education. Therefore, target group resistance may not only be essential for the development process, but may also lead to transformational learning and action for social justice. If faculty allies keep in mind that target group resistance may serve a critical purpose in learning instead of blaming them, students may find ways to return to learning rather than retreating completely.

[I'm Trying To Use My Husband's White Privilege A Little Less But it's not working](#)

I'm Trying To Use My Husband's White Privilege A Little Less But it's not quite working out for me



[Rebecca Stevens A.](#)

Jul 13

<https://medium.com/illumination-curated/im-trying-to-use-my-husband-s-white-privilege-a-little-less-61e9d1706c90>

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I'm a Black woman. I've been married to my white husband for more than 25 years. During that time, I benefitted from his white privilege and when we are together, I have avoided facing the full brunt of racism on countless occasions.

I must admit that over the years, I have dragged my white husband along with me to places where I knew his privilege would help me. Whenever I need to renew my passport, for example, get a visa to visit a country, get a bank loan,

consult a white doctor or buy a new car. In these places, I have always known, I'd see racism at its worst without his presence.

Some days when I feel my mental health cannot deal with yet another incident of racism, I ask him to come with me to the gym or grocery shopping. Our white friends sometimes criticize us for being in what they define as an over-fusional relationship. They have difficulty understanding that I need my husband's white privilege to get through a racism-free day.

Recently, I decided to try to wane myself off his white privilege. I realized just how hooked I am on it and ventured out on a day of shopping with my mixed-race daughter to see if we'd make it through the day without a racist incident. We didn't.

Last weekend, as we ventured around our new neighborhood in Paris, I realized that Summer sales were in full swing. I got rather excited because, in each shop window, I saw some gorgeously designed colorful dresses. I pinched myself, once again realizing that I was now living in Paris, the world's capital of fashion.

We walked into one of the stores, and I was immediately drawn to a white and blue blazer on a rack. Within minutes I had tried it on and my daughter had given me the thumbs up to purchase it. I looked down at the price tag, it had been reduced. I smiled to myself, eager to soon add this new piece of clothing to my wardrobe.

My daughter took a keen interest in some long skirts hanging on the rack. She couldn't decide which one she wanted and so we took three of them to the changing room to try on. We didn't feel under any time pressure and I still wanted to check out some stuff in the store, so she took all the time she needed.

About 20 minutes later, the white storekeeper who had smiled at us when we entered got frantic.

“Where is the blue and white blazer?” she asked me visibly alarmed. “Where have you hidden it?”

It took me a split second to react. “I haven’t hidden it....”

I barely had time to finish my sentence had she rushed into the changing room, pulled the curtain aside — thereby exposing my daughter, and started foraging for the blazer.

I was so stunned by her behavior, I stood there speechless.

She did find the blazer in the changing room underneath the skirts my daughter was trying. I saw her face turn crimson as she realized just how ridiculous her whole behavior had been. She had quite clearly thought that we had stolen the blazer.

My daughter realized what was happening and asked me if I was ok. I tried to pretend like I was, but truth be told, I felt so humiliated.

I almost wanted to tell my daughter how sorry I was that she always had to go through such situations whenever she was out with me.

I put the blue and white blazer back on the rack. My daughter was now all dressed up in her own clothes and we made our way toward the exit.

“Aren’t you going to buy the blazer, it fits you so well,” the shopkeeper asked.

“No, we are fine”, I responded calmly.

“But....”, she stammered. “I didn’t mean to offend you, I was just checking the changing room to see if you needed any assistance...”

She knew that her poor lie of an excuse wasn’t working and stopped mid-sentence.

We continued toward the exit into the sweltering hot Parisian day. My daughter asked:

“It did look very nice Mummy, are you sure you don’t want to buy it?”

“I can’t anymore”, I responded. “If I did buy it, every time I’d see it in my closet, I’d be reminded of this horrible incident, and I don’t want that.

“I totally understand Mummy, I get it”. she responded.

We didn’t linger on what happened for the remainder of the day, but the incident really did affect me as I am sure it did her.

The reality however is that I can’t, I mean we can’t always have my white husband or any other white person with us every single minute of our lives just to avoid racist incidents like the one I have described above. What we need is for the world to change, for ignorant white people like that shopkeeper to not automatically think that since I was Black, I came into her store to steal something. This needs to change.

I hope that if my daughter has children, she won’t have to go through what I go through today. I hope her generation is the one that will finally lead us to a

place where white privilege is a relic of the past and no longer a mainstay of the present.

Thank you for reading my perspective.

My Half White Daughter Just Realized She Didn't Have White Privilege

And it pained me when she found out



[Rebecca Stevens A.](#)

Apr 25

<https://medium.com/illumination-curated/my-half-white-daughter-just-realized-she-didnt-have-white-privilege-5b0bdd191e3c>

3 min read

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Photo by [Ahmed Adel](#) on [Unsplash](#)

The other day, my 16-year-old mixed-race daughter and I went shopping. It was our special moment, our time together bonding. I'm having quite an obsession with Vans shoes recently and so does she. We realized that every single shoe

store in the mall carried different designs but we couldn't find my daughter's size in one pattern she particularly liked, so we decided to go into each store.

At one point I fell behind because I wanted to get us some water. I asked my daughter to go ahead and enter the shoe store next door. She knew what to ask the salesperson for since we had been doing the same exercise for most of the afternoon.

As Murphy's Law would have it, the minute I entered the drug store to pick up two bottles of Evian, I noticed a long queue start to form at the cash register. I sighed in aggravation. There had been no line two minutes ago, why did it have to happen now? As I waited impatiently in the queue, I saw my daughter enter the store. She seemed annoyed.

"What happened, didn't they have your size in that store", I asked.

"Well, I'm not sure I even want to find out", she answered.

"What?" I asked, visibly surprised.

"Well, when I entered the store, the white salesperson gave me a bad look. It was as if he didn't want me there. I went to look at the section where they displayed Vans and he just completely ignored me. There was no one else in the store. I waited there, right next to the shoes, clearly showing my interest, and he just continued looking down at his desk. He didn't even come to help me. I'm done, I don't even feel like buying the shoes anymore".

As I listened to her, I too felt annoyed. Here was a sixteen-year-old girl — who looks sixteen, by the way, trying to buy something and this was how she was

treated in this day and age. I tried to keep my anger in check as we walked back to the store.

“But Mum, I told you, I don’t want the shoes anymore”.

“You don’t want them because you changed your mind or because of the way you were treated when you entered the store?”

“It’s the latter Mum, but the behavior has removed all my desire and excitement to buy those shoes. Let’s try some other time”.

“But you can’t allow that lousy salesperson to have so much control over you”, I said.

“I’m not, I just don’t feel like buying those shoes anymore”.

I couldn’t be deterred. We walked into the store and the salesperson noticed us but did not budge. He carried on looking down at some papers he was reading at the cash register or maybe he was looking down at his phone. He completely ignored us.

Now, I had a choice to make: was I going to give him a piece of my mind, or was I going to leave the store in peace?

In the end, I decided on the latter. Why? Because my daughter had already been discriminated against and I felt it was unfair to put her through a potentially confrontational situation all on the same day. So, I shut up and we left.

The reality though is that this whole situation pained me immensely. It's one thing for me to be a victim of racism, I have been around on earth for long to know how to manage it. When my offspring goes through a similar predicament, it enrages me.

Like many parents, I want to protect her from a too cruel world, a world where people will treat her differently and give her fewer chances because of the color of her skin.

I felt so much anger at my brush with this a few weeks ago and I ask myself how am I going to manage the many other times when this will happen to my mixed-race children in this very racist world.

I simply pray that I'll be able to cope.

Thank you for reading my perspective.

Pope Francis apologises for school abuses in Canada

26 Jul, 2022 07:56 AM

<https://www.nzherald.co.nz/world/pope-francis-apologises-for-school-abuses-in-canada/SOIR2W5EIXX5CTSJVU3A3O5RHE/>

COMMENT: Sometimes an apology is made with no compensation. It offers nothing at all to undo harm that was caused. In this case, the Catholic Church has given some funds. Whether the quantity is relevant to all of the issues involved, is open to question. See also chapters about reparations. When the quantity is clearly inconsequential, then it brings into question the sincerity of the apology.



Pope Francis puts on an indigenous headdress during a meeting with indigenous communities.
Photo / AP

Pope Francis issued a historic apology Monday for the Catholic Church's cooperation with Canada's "catastrophic" policy of Indigenous residential schools, saying the forced assimilation of Native peoples into Christian society destroyed their cultures, severed families and marginalised generations in ways still being felt today.

"I am deeply sorry," Francis said, to applause from school survivors and Indigenous community members gathered at a former residential school south of Edmonton, Alberta, the first event of Francis' weeklong "penitential pilgrimage" to Canada.

The morning after he arrived in the country, Francis traveled to the lands of four Cree nations to pray at a cemetery. Four chiefs then escorted the pontiff in his wheelchair to powwow ceremonial grounds where he delivered the long-sought apology and was given a feathered headdress.

"I humbly beg forgiveness for the evil committed by so many Christians against the Indigenous peoples," Francis said near the site of the former Ermineskin Indian Residential School, now largely torn down.

His words went beyond his earlier apology for the "deplorable" acts of missionaries and instead took responsibility for the church's institutional cooperation with the "catastrophic" assimilation policy, which Canada's Truth and Reconciliation Commission said amounted to a "cultural genocide".

More than 150,000 native children in Canada were forced to attend state-funded Christian schools from the 19th century until the 1970s in an effort to isolate them from the influence of their homes and culture. The aim was to christianise and assimilate them into mainstream society, which previous Canadian governments considered superior.

The Canadian government has admitted that physical and sexual abuse was rampant at the schools, with students beaten for speaking their native languages. That legacy of that abuse and isolation from family has been cited by Indigenous leaders as a root cause of the epidemic rates of alcohol and drug addiction now on Canadian reservations.

The discoveries of hundreds of potential burial sites at former schools in the past year drew international attention to the legacy of the schools in Canada and their counterparts in the United States. The discoveries prompted Francis to comply with the truth commission's call for him to apologise on Canadian soil for the Catholic Church's role; Catholic religious orders operated 66 of the 139 schools in Canada.

Many in the crowd Monday wore traditional dress, including colorful ribbon skirts and vests with Native motifs. Others donned orange shirts, which have become a symbol of residential school survivors, recalling the story of one woman whose favourite orange shirt, a gift from her grandmother, was confiscated when she arrived at a school and replaced with a uniform.

Despite the solemnity of the event, the atmosphere seemed at times joyful: Chiefs processed into the site venue to a hypnotic drumbeat, elders danced and the crowd cheered and chanted war songs, victory songs and finally a healing song.

One of the hosts of the event, Chief Randy Ermineskin of the Ermineskin Cree Nation, said some had chosen to stay away — and that that was understandable. But he said it was nevertheless a historic, important day for his people.



Pope Francis prays in a cemetery at the former residential school, in Maskwacis, near Edmonton, Canada. Photo / AP

"My late family members are not here with us anymore, my parents went to residential school, I went to residential school," he told the Associated Press as he waited for Francis to arrive. "I know they're with me, they're listening, they're watching."

Felisha Crier Hosein traveled from Florida to attend in the place of her mother, who helped create the museum for the nearby Samson Cree Nation and had planned to attend, but died in May.

"I came here to represent her and to be here for the elders and the community," said Hosein, who wore one of her mother's colourful ribbon skirts.

"Sorry is not going to make what happened go away," she said. "But it means a lot to the elders."

Prime Minister Justin Trudeau, who last year voiced an apology for the "incredibly harmful government policy" in organising the residential school system, was also attending along with the Governor-General and other officials.

As part of a lawsuit settlement involving the government, churches and approximately 90,000 survivors, Canada paid reparations that amounted to billions of dollars being transferred to Indigenous communities. Canada's Catholic Church says its dioceses and religious orders have provided more than \$50 million in cash and in-kind contributions and hope to add \$30 million more over the next five years.

While the Pope acknowledged institutional blame, he also made clear that Catholic missionaries were merely cooperating with and implementing the government policy of assimilation, which he termed the "colonizing mentality of the powers".

"I ask forgiveness, in particular, for the ways in which many members of the church and of religious communities cooperated, not least through their indifference, in projects of cultural destruction and forced assimilation promoted by the governments of that time, which culminated in the system of residential schools," he said.

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He said the policy marginalised generations, suppressed Indigenous languages, severed families, led to physical, verbal, psychological and spiritual abuse and "indelibly affected relationships between parents and children, grandparents and grandchildren". He called for further investigation, a possible reference to Indigenous demands for further access to church records and personnel files of the priests and nuns to identify who was responsible for the abuses.

"Although Christian charity was not absent, and there were many outstanding instances of devotion and care for children, the overall effects of the policies linked to the residential schools

were catastrophic," Francis said. "What our Christian faith tells us is that this was a disastrous error, incompatible with the Gospel of Jesus Christ."

The first Pope from the Americas was determined to make this trip, even though torn knee ligaments forced him to cancel a visit to Africa earlier this month.

The six-day visit — which will also include other former school sites in Alberta, Quebec City and Iqaluit, Nunavut, in the far north — follows meetings Francis held in the spring at the Vatican with delegations from the First Nations, Metis and Inuit. Those meetings culminated with an April 1 apology for the "deplorable" abuses committed by some Catholic missionaries in residential schools and Francis' promise to deliver an apology in person on Canadian soil.

Francis recalled that during in April, one of the delegations gave him a set of beaded moccasins as a symbol of the children who never returned from the schools, and asked him to return them in Canada. Francis said in these months they had "kept alive my sense of sorrow, indignation and shame" but that in returning them he hoped they could also represent a path to walk together.

Event organisers said they would do everything possible to make sure survivors could attend the event, busing them in and offering mental health counselors to be on hand knowing that the event could be traumatic for some.

Francis acknowledged that the memories could trigger old wounds, and that even his mere presence there could be traumatic, but he said remembering was important to prevent indifference.

"It is necessary to remember how the policies of assimilation and enfranchisement, which also included the residential school system, were devastating for the people of these lands."

Later Monday, Francis was scheduled to visit Sacred Heart Church of the First Peoples, a Catholic parish in Edmonton oriented toward Indigenous people and culture. The church, whose sanctuary was dedicated last week after being restored from a fire, incorporates Indigenous language and customs in liturgy.

Settler Colonialism

<https://globalsocialtheory.org/concepts/settler-colonialism/>

Settler colonialism is a distinct type of colonialism that functions through the replacement of indigenous populations with an invasive settler society that, over time, develops a distinctive identity and sovereignty. Settler colonial states include Canada, the United States, Australia, and South Africa, and settler colonial theory has been important to understanding conflicts in places like Israel, Kenya, and Argentina, and in tracing the colonial legacies of empires that engaged in the widespread foundation of settlement colonies. More recently, settler colonial analyses have been extended to the use of settler colonisation in larger imperial projects, and the impacts of settler colonial state power on global politics. As Lorenzo Veracini, a key scholar in settler colonial studies, argues “settler colonialism makes sense especially if it is understood globally, and that we live in a settler colonial global present” (*The Settler Colonial Present*, 2015).



Settler colonialism can be distinguished from other forms of colonialism – including classical or metropole colonialism, and neo-colonialism – by a number of key features. First, settler colonisers “come to stay”: unlike colonial agents such as traders, soldiers, or governors, settler collectives intend to permanently occupy and assert sovereignty over indigenous lands. Second, settler colonial invasion is a structure, not an event: settler colonialism persists in the ongoing elimination of indigenous populations, and the assertion of state sovereignty and juridical control over their lands. Despite notions of post-coloniality, settler colonial societies do not stop being colonial when political allegiance to the founding metropole is severed. Third, settler colonialism seeks its own end: unlike other types of colonialism in which the goal is to

maintain colonial structures and imbalances in power between coloniser and colonised, settler colonisation trends towards the ending of colonial difference in the form of a supreme and unchallenged settler state and people. However, this is not a drive to decolonise, but rather an attempt to eliminate the challenges posed to settler sovereignty by indigenous peoples' claims to land by eliminating indigenous peoples themselves and asserting false narratives and structures of settler belonging.

Settler colonial societies around the globe tend to rely on remarkably similar spatial constructs, power structures, and social narratives. Beginning with *terra nullius* – the perception that lands in long-term use by indigenous peoples are empty or unused – settler colonisation proceeds to carve up indigenous-held lands into discrete packets of private property. As settler collectives invest their identity and material belonging in these properties, they simultaneously create or empower a state to 'defend' these properties from indigenous peoples and nations who are seen as inherently threatening. The power of settler state structures is often embodied in the form of frontier police forces, like the Royal Canadian Mounted Police, various Australian mounted police forces, and the ubiquitous American cavalry of the 'Wild West', as well as bureaucratic agencies. These government officials have gone under many names, but in North America are commonly called 'Indian Agents', and they often wielded (and in some cases, continue to hold) extraordinary power over indigenous peoples, including the ability to apprehend children, to prevent people from leaving official 'reserve' lands (or conversely, to expel individuals or families from reserved territories), to control employment, and even to summarily direct police or military forces against indigenous people. These extreme powers are exercised based on carefully constructed racist narratives. Consider the way indigenous people have (and are) considered to be 'savage' – men often portrayed as violent, women as hyper-sexualized, and both in need of care from the 'civilised' settler state. The narrative dehumanization of indigenous peoples supports parallel narratives of peaceful, adventurous and virtuous settlement and expansion, as 'brave pioneers' are held up as paragons of new settler nations carved out of frontier spaces.



As a concept, settler colonialism has been in circulation for decades, but has achieved new relevance since the publication of a number of works in the later 1990s and early 2000s introduced settler colonial theory to disciplines such as anthropology, sociology, and political theory. Debates around settler colonial studies have been contentious, especially around intersections between settler colonial racism and identity politics. Numerous works have explored the ways that oppressed or marginalized communities may be complicit in settler colonialism, often generating heated debates around who is or should be considered a 'settler'. Other critiques have pointed to the tendency among some scholars of settler colonialism to treat settlement as inevitable, simultaneously relieving settler societies and states of the burden of reconciling with indigenous peoples, and placing the burden of accommodating settler sovereignty onto those same indigenous peoples. More recently, settler colonial scholars have taken up the challenge of considering what decolonisation means for settler societies, drawing settler colonial theory into open-ended and forward-looking discussions on indigenisation, autonomy, and anti-state and anti-capitalist politics.

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Questions

What is the significance of settlement as a process? Why is it important to think of (classical) colonisation and settler colonisation as two distinct processes?

How does settler colonialism impact on 'exogenous Others' – groups of people who are neither indigenous to the territories claimed by the settler colony, nor seen as part of the settler society by the majority of settler colonisers?

How is settler colonialism entangled with processes of racialization and capitalist accumulation? How do these processes differ or conflict?

How does settler colonialism turn 'land' into 'property'? How does this process relate to concepts such as 'enclosure', 'territorialization', and 'primitive accumulation'?

What would decolonization entail in a settler colonial context? Is decolonization possible?

Submitted by Adam Barker and Emma Battell Lowman

<https://www.thoughtco.com/american-settler-colonialism-4082454>



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By

Dina Gilio-Whitaker

Updated on December 05, 2020

The term "colonialism" is possibly one of the most confusing, if not contested, concepts in American history and international relations theory. Most Americans would likely be hard-pressed to define it beyond the "colonial period" of U.S. history when early European immigrants established their colonies in the New World. The assumption is that since the founding of the United States everybody who is born within the national boundaries is considered American citizens with equal rights, whether or not they consent to such citizenship. In this regard, the United States is normalized as the dominant power to which all its citizens, Indigenous and non-Indigenous alike, are subject. Although a democracy is "of the people, by the people, and for the people" in theory, the nation's actual history of imperialism betrays its democratic principles. This is the history of American colonialism.

Two Kinds of Colonialism

Colonialism as a concept has its roots in European expansionism and the founding of the so-called New World. The British, French, Dutch, Portuguese, Spanish, and other European powers established colonies in new places they "discovered" from which to facilitate trade and extract resources, in what can be thought of as the earliest stages of what we now call globalization. The mother country (known as the metropole) would come to dominate Indigenous populations through their colonial governments, even when the Indigenous population remained in the majority for the duration of colonial control. The most obvious examples are in Africa, such as the Dutch control over South Africa and French control over Algeria, and in Asia and the Pacific Rim, such as British control over India and Fiji and French domination over Tahiti.

Beginning in the 1940s the world saw a wave of decolonization in many of Europe's colonies as Indigenous populations fought wars of resistance against colonial domination. Mahatma Gandhi would come to be recognized as one of the world's greatest heroes for leading India's fight against the British. Likewise, Nelson Mandela is today celebrated as a freedom fighter for South Africa, where he was once considered a terrorist. In these instances European governments were forced to pack up and go home, relinquishing control to the indigenous population.

But there were some places where colonial invasion decimated Indigenous populations through foreign disease and military domination to the point where if the Indigenous population survived at all, it became the minority while the settler population became the majority. The best examples of this are in North and South America, the Caribbean islands, New Zealand, Australia, and even Israel. In these cases, scholars have recently applied the term "settler colonialism."

Settler Colonialism Defined

Settler colonialism has best been defined as more of an imposed structure than a historical event. This structure is characterized by relationships of domination and subjugation that become woven throughout the fabric of society and even becomes disguised as paternalistic benevolence. The objective of settler colonialism is always the acquisition of Indigenous territories and resources, which means the Indigenous inhabitants must be eliminated. This can be accomplished in overt ways including biological warfare and military domination but also in more subtle ways; for example, through national policies of assimilation.

As scholar Patrick Wolfe has argued, the logic of settler colonialism is that it destroys in order to replace. Assimilation involves the systematic stripping away of Indigenous culture and replacing it with that of the dominant culture. One of the ways it does this in the United States is through racialization. Racialization is the process of measuring Indigenous ethnicity in terms of blood degree; when Indigenous people intermarry with non-Indigenous people they are said to lower their Indigenous blood quantum. According to this logic, when enough intermarriage has occurred there will be no more natives within a given lineage. It does not take into account personal identity based on cultural affiliation or other markers of cultural competence or involvement.

Other ways the United States carried out its assimilation policy included the allotment of Indigenous lands, forced enrollment in Indigenous boarding schools, termination and relocation programs, the bestowal of American citizenship, and Christianization.

Narratives of Benevolence

It can be said that a narrative based on the benevolence of the nation guides policy decisions once domination has been established in the settler colonial state. This is evident in many of the legal doctrines at the foundation of federal Indigenous law in the U.S.

Primary among those doctrines is the doctrine of Christian discovery. The doctrine of discovery (a good example of benevolent paternalism) was first articulated by Supreme Court Justice John Marshall in *Johnson v. McIntosh* (1823), in which he opined that Indigenous peoples had no right to title on their own lands in part because the new European immigrants "bestow[ed] on them civilization and Christianity." Likewise, the trust doctrine presumes that the U.S., as the trustee over Indigenous lands and resources, will always act with the best interests of Indigenous peoples in mind. Two centuries of massive Indigenous land expropriations by the U.S. and other abuses, however, betrays this idea.

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Israel is a settler colony, annexing native land is what it does (OTHER people's land)

Opinions

Since its early days of colonising Palestine, the Zionist movement has always aimed to establish a Greater Israel.



M Muhannad Ayyash

<https://www.aljazeera.com/opinions/2020/7/7/israel-is-a-settler-colony-annexing-native-land-is-what-it-does>

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A Palestinian man stands in front of Israeli forces during a protest against Israeli settlements in the Israeli-occupied West Bank on February 25, 2020 [File: Reuters/Raneen Sawafta]

The international rejection of Israel's plan to formally annex even more Palestinian land is based on two arguments: the annexation is a violation of international law and it defeats the prospects of a two-state solution.

The world view of this international consensus underscores as problematic the lack of a reciprocal dialogue between the sides, their inability to compromise and the unilateral actions that inhibit peace efforts. At the same time, it foregrounds conventional peace-building processes that emphasise mutual recognition as well as economic and security cooperation.

There is basically a belief in the international community that universal international laws and norms can facilitate a just outcome to the conflict with two independent states living side by side.

This world view is operating in a diplomatic space that has lost all connection to the realities that ordinary Palestinians face. The Palestinian losses are much more serious than is conventionally suggested in the “save the two-state solution before it is too late” type of thinking.

It is already a very late hour for the prospects of Palestinian freedom and sovereignty. A different lens must, therefore, be adopted, which first and foremost underscores the logic that underlies the Israeli state – settler-colonialism.

A settler colony

Academics have debated for decades whether Israel constitutes a settler colony, and following the arguments of leading scholars such as Joseph Massad, Rashid Khalidi, Noura Erakat, Ilan Pappé, Hamid Dabashi and Robert Wolfe (among others), the answer is convincing: Israel is the product of a national settler-colonial project.

So, what makes a settler colony a settler colony? The answer to this question cannot be reduced to specific characteristics but must instead be sought in a general principle. Simply put: all settler colonies constitute a continuous process of land annexation, whereby native inhabitants are removed and settlers from elsewhere are brought to occupy the land.

To be sure, all modern nation-states have annexed land in certain respects, but the settler-colonial state’s distinguishing feature is that it does not come into being and cannot continue to exist without claiming sovereignty over land that is forcefully taken from its native inhabitants. In short, the settler colony can only claim its sovereignty through the eradication and erasure of native sovereignty.

The methods of annexation certainly vary, but this variety should not detract us from naming and highlighting their underlying logic: the expulsion of native people from their lands. This is the core problem of the Palestinian-Israeli struggle. And nowhere is this logic more visible than in the expansion of settlements on occupied Palestinian lands.

Settlements and the Israeli state

Not all, but the majority of arguments that emphasise international law and the peace process are based on the dubious assumption that Israel is interested in seeing a Palestinian state established along the 1967 borders. But Israeli policies have clearly shown that is not their goal or aspiration.

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The list is long but among those policies are the long-held policy of [annexing East Jerusalem](#); the building of the [apartheid wall](#); the [siege on Gaza](#), separating Palestinian land into non-contiguous units; the constant imprisonment of Palestinians under the charge of [being political](#); the occupation and the checkpoints that make life impossible for ordinary Palestinians, hence encouraging their emigration; the [de-development](#) of the Palestinian economy; the policy of [home demolitions](#); the [discriminatory policies](#) against Palestinian citizens of Israel that deny them the ability to purchase and lease land; and the [non-ending stream](#) of Israeli government permits to build more settlements and expand existing ones.

It is important to take a moment and reflect on the last point. For decades, settler movements and the settlers have been expelling and replacing native Palestinians from more and more Palestinian lands. In much of what passes as intellectual diplomatic discourse in North America and Western Europe, these settlers are presented as divorced from the Israeli state and even painted as a burden on the Israeli state.

This occurs even when Israeli policy is directly tied to the expansion of settlements. In 2016, for example, then-Secretary of State John Kerry [claimed](#), “Let’s be clear. Settlement expansion has nothing to do with Israel’s security. Many settlements actually increase the security burden on the Israeli defence forces and leaders of the settler movement are motivated by ideological imperatives that entirely ignore legitimate Palestinian aspirations.”

And when he was not divorcing the ideology of the settlement leaders from the ideology of the state, Kerry made sure to present the settlements as a side issue, and not the core of the problem: “Let me emphasise, this is not to say that the settlements are the whole or even the primary cause of this conflict, of course they are not. Nor can you say that if the settlements were suddenly removed, you’d have peace without a broader agreement. You would not.”

Versions of this discourse are repeated ad nauseam in the diplomatic arena, all of which misses (purposely or not) the crucial point that these settlers are not ideologically opposed to the state, but are rather a mirror for the foundation of the Israeli state revealed in its naked form.

The main difference is that these settlers act without the sophisticated rhetoric that hides and conceals the violence of the settler colony. They do not hide their intention to remove Palestinians and expand the state that is to come, the state of Greater Israel.

Since the early 20th century, the Zionist movement has longed for the creation of a Greater Israel, but it has been savvy enough to hide and conceal its intentions, especially in the international arena.

As Benny Morris put it in his famous book *The Birth of the Palestinian Refugee Problem*, “[Zionist leader David] Ben-Gurion, a pragmatist, from 1937 on, was willing (at least outwardly) to accept partition and the establishment of a Jewish state in only part of the country. In effect, he remained committed to a vision of Jewish sovereignty over all of Palestine as the ultimate goal of Zionism, to be attained by stages.”

The current relation between the state and the settlers is, thus, not one of opposition or nuisance, but one between a force that expands (the settlers) and a force that makes possible but hides the violence of the expansion (the state). And at the opportune moment, provided in this case through the Trump administration’s unwavering support for Israel, the state becomes one with the settlers out in the open and officially expands.

The annexation plan is nothing more than the state's turn to claim sovereignty over what the settlers have already annexed. And they are able to annex precisely because the state makes that possible through its occupation of Palestinian land.

And this cycle will not stop. The settlers will continue to expand and annex with the aid of the state, until such time that the state can officially announce the reality of their fusion with the settlers, taking even more land.

As far as the Israelis are concerned, time is on their side, and they can patiently proceed stage by stage.

Empty words

The latest round of international reactions will predictably change nothing for the Palestinian people. International law will flag the violation against its rules, words of "condemnation" will fill the air, analysts and commentators will discuss the "strength" of these words in comparison to past statements, and Palestinian land will continue to be stolen.

Palestinian lives will continue to be threatened with death, injury, debilitation, occupation, oppression and expulsion while the world watches and pronounces empty words.

These words do not carry any consequence that can give them meaning, depth, and force. They are part of the diplomatic routine, which gives the feeling that something is being done, that the world is watching closely and that the world is concerned for Palestine.

This chimera of an act ends up sustaining the status quo and ensures that nothing consequential is ever undertaken. The very emptiness of these words thus becomes another weapon that enables annexation.

Many ordinary Palestinians have understood this situation for some time: the cavalry is not coming – not from the Arab world, not from the UN and not from international law. And in their absence, those international institutions and states show themselves as part of the problem, not the solution.

Israeli settler colonialism will not rest until the majority of the Palestinians are removed and expelled, and all of the Palestinian lands are under Israeli sovereignty, just as Ben-Gurion envisioned.

Israel cannot tolerate the idea of Palestinian sovereignty, let alone its implementation because the erasure of Palestinian sovereignty is part and parcel of the underlying logic of the settler colony. As a result, regardless of how much land Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu and his ally, Defence Minister Benny Gantz actually annex this year, this episode will be neither the first nor will it be the last.

The settler colony, secured in its power after the founding violence, often plays a long game. But despite the scantest of hopes of ever gaining their freedom and sovereignty, the Palestinians will continue to stand, more or less, alone in their long and historic [resistance](#).

The views expressed in this article are the author's own and do not necessarily reflect Al Jazeera's editorial stance.



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https://www.researchgate.net/publication/242734810_INVISIBLE_CITIZENS_Israel_Government_Policy_Toward_the_Negev_Bedouin

<https://adva.org/wp-content/uploads/2014/09/NegevEnglishSummary.pdf>

Introduction

The Bedouin living in the Negev constitute the only group of Arab citizens of Israel that still has a large-scale hold on the land, a hold that the state officially denies in principle, while recognizing in practice. The Bedouin still hold on to a sizeable tract of land, despite the fact that at the time of the establishment of the state, they were expelled from the lands on which they lived, despite the fact that subsequently they were compelled to move to a new, more arid area, and despite the fact that large land confiscations were made even of those arid lands.

At the same time, the Bedouin living in the Negev also constitute the only large social group in Israel about which it can be said, that it still does not stand on firm ground. Since 1948, the Bedouin have been struggling to obtain full, official recognition of their ownership rights to the lands on which they live, as well as the same government services that other Israelis receive, so that they can carry on a normal community and cultural life. While the Bedouin continue to struggle for these aims, the government continues its efforts to expel and relocate them in the fewest possible settlements. In addition, it excludes the Bedouin from its development plans, as if they constituted a group that was entirely superfluous to the Israeli economy and society.

The Bedouin who live in unrecognized villages exist in what amounts to a legal and political bubble. These Israelis are not allowed to construct a permanent dwelling, do not have the right to put the name of their village in their ID cards, lack a local government and the right to vote and to be elected to local office, do not receive the full range of public services that other citizens receive, and lack the basic property right of home purchase and sale. Moreover, they are ruled by bodies set up by the state for the express purpose of controlling them.

In like manner, Bedouin residing in government-created towns live in a political and cultural bubble of their own. On the one hand, they lack the infrastructure and employment opportunities that might enable them to engage in economic activity and enjoy a standard of living similar to that of neighboring Jewish localities; on the other, like the unrecognized villages, they are not usually included in government development plans, whether these are national or regional in scope.

At the present time, the Bedouin lack the resources that might enable them to develop economically, and they are at the bottom of the government's priorities. At the same time, the population of the Negev, of which the Bedouin constitute about 25 percent, is weak and divided; each social group tries to promote itself, without cooperating with its neighbors. In such a situation, the Bedouin are the biggest losers, but in the long run, all residents of the Negev stand to lose.

The 1948 Upheaval

On the eve of the establishment of the State of Israel, the population of the Negev included some 70,000 Bedouin, who resided primarily in the northwestern part of the Negev. During the 1948 war, most of the Bedouin either fled or were driven out. At the end of the war, 11,000 Bedouin remained. The government of Israel relocated them to the Sayig region, in the northeastern part of the Negev - the area between Beer Sheba and what are now the Jewish towns of Arad, Dimona and Yeruham.

In 1950, the “Absentees Property Law” was passed. This law allowed the state to confiscate and register in its own name lands belonging to Palestinian Arabs who had fled or been expelled during the war, including lands belonging to Bedouin who were no longer residing in Israel or had been transferred to the Sayig. In 1953 another piece of legislation, the “Land Acquisition (Validation of Acts and Compensation) Law,” legitimized those confiscations.

The State of Israel and the Lands Claimed by the Bedouin

The State of Israel does not officially recognize land ownership rights of Bedouin. This position rests on an Ottoman Land Order of 1858 and on a Land Order of the British Mandate Government of 1921, which was itself based on the order from Ottoman times. The Ottoman Order referred to “dead” (mawat) lands that were uncultivated and located within one and a half miles from a permanent settlement. It stated that whoever cultivated such lands could register them in their names. At the time of the promulgation of the original order, there were no permanent settlements in the Negev, a fact that made all the lands mawat lands. Still, the Bedouin cultivated some of those lands, but for a variety of reasons, they did not register them. The British Mandate Order once again asked that persons cultivating mawat lands register them in their own names. As before, the Bedouin did not bother to register their lands, for a variety of reasons, among them problems of accessibility and fear of taxation. The British even carried out a campaign for land registration, beginning in the north and working their way southward. They did not manage to get as far south as the Negev before evacuating Palestine in 1948. On the basis of these two precedents, Israel determined that lands used or claimed by the Bedouin did not belong to them but rather to the state. The state used two strategies to establish its ownership over lands claimed by the Bedouin: firstly, transferring Bedouin to a small number of government-created towns; secondly, offering compensation to Bedouin claimants.

Relocation and Concentration in Government-Created Townships

At the end of the 1950s, government agencies turned to the issue of what to do with the Bedouin living in the Negev. Although there was general agreement regarding the desirability of limiting them to as small an area as possible, two different approaches can be discerned. One was that of Moshe Dayan, who proposed resettling the Bedouin in integrated Jewish-Arab localities, in the center of the country. The other was that of Yigal Alon, who was of the opinion that the Bedouin ought to be concentrated into two or three large settlements in the Sayig area. The Bedouin strongly resisted the idea of removal from the Negev. In this they were supported by the Jewish parties of the Left. In the end, Moshe Dayan’s proposal was abandoned in favor of Yigal Alon’s. In March 1962, an inter-ministerial committee recommended the creation of permanent Bedouin settlements in the Sayig area, encompassing 7,600 dunams – a very small part of the area claimed by the Bedouin. This recommendation became the cornerstone of all government actions for the next forty years.

On Land Claims and Compensation

Parallel to the attempt to concentrate the Bedouin in a small number of settlements, a process was begun of contesting ownership claims for lands in the Sayig area. As early as 1950, Bedouin took their land claims to court. For its part, the state contended that the Bedouin had no proof of ownership; moreover, it contended that the certificates of tax payment cited as proof of ownership had gotten lost in the state archives.

In 1969, the state set up a legal mechanism for dealing with land questions. The Bedouin submitted ownership claims for a total of 991,000 dunams of land, 200,000 of which were outside the Sayig area that the state had already registered in its own name. Today, the scope of disputed lands amounts to 650,000 dunams.

In 1975 a committee chaired by attorney Plia Albeck formulated a settlement proposal that guides government actions to this day. The Albeck Commission recommendations were based on three principles. The first was non-recognition of the ownership rights of the lands on which the Bedouin were living or had lived in the past, following

the Ottoman and British precedents. The second principle was willingness to offer the Bedouin, ex gratia (by favor rather than legal obligation), compensation for the lands they claimed; here the contention was that noncompensation “is not acceptable from a humane point of view, and it can be assumed that the High Court would not accept [a settlement that did not involve compensation]”. The third principle was that the award of compensation was to be conditioned on the Bedouin’ relinquishing the lands they claimed and settling in one of the government townships. For Bedouin who agreed to relocate and who claimed lands consisting of 400 dunams or more – a minority – the Albeck Commission recommended that the state accede to their ownership of 20% of the land and compensate them for the loss of the remaining 80%.

The implications of the Albeck recommendations were simple: the Bedouin were to give up their claims to most of their lands. The offer was turned down. Some time later, the Bedouin made a counter-offer: the state would accede to their ownership of 40% of their lands and compensate them for the remainder, at a higher rate than that offered by the Albeck Commission. Their offer was not accepted.

In 1980, the government expelled some 5,000 Bedouin from the area of Tel Malhatah, within the Sayig, to make way for the Nevatim military airport, following the peace agreement with Egypt, which required evacuation of the Israel Defense Forces from the Sinai Peninsula, including the military airports there. The Bedouin were offered compensation in the spirit of the original government proposal of 1975. This compensation was much smaller than the compensation offered at the very same time to Jewish citizens who had settled in the Sinai Peninsula. The Bedouin turned down the offer, so the state opted for a means at its disposal: expulsion and compensation, by means of special legislation, “The Negev Land Acquisition (Peace Treaty With Egypt) Law – 1980.” Although the compensation was ungenerous, “The Peace Law” involved further recognition of the Bedouin claims to the land, by virtue of the state’s continuing readiness to pay compensation. Another important precedent set by the same law was that compensation could include not only money but also alternative agricultural land and water rights. In this manner, the state recognized the fact that many Bedouin were farmers, thus creating an opening for new possibilities that included the receipt of cultivable land and lands for pasturage, leasing arrangements, water allocations, and the like.

Soon afterwards, in May 1984, a High Court decision was handed down on a petition submitted by Bedouin asking for recognition of their ownership rights of lands in the Sayig area. The Court, under Justice Abraham Halima, decided unequivocally in favor of the state, declaring that the Negev lands were mawat lands and as such belonged to the state. This severe verdict did not put an end to compromise attempts that had preceded it. However, it certified a state of stalemate: on the one hand, the Bedouin were prevented from developing the lands on which they lived and setting up infrastructures, permanent housing and businesses, and on the other hand, the state was prevented from making any use of these lands without first compensating the Bedouin. Needless to say, those adversely affected by the stalemate were the Bedouin.

Since then, the state of Israel has on occasion updated the terms of its offer. At the time of writing, the most recent offer was to be found in decision # 1028 of May 2, 2005, of the Israel Land Administration. This compensation offer was only slightly higher than those of 1975 and 1980, and in return the Bedouin were asked to forgo their claims, to leave the lands on which they were living, and to agree to have them registered in the name of the state.

The Sharon administration hardened the state position, by serving counter claims on the lands claimed by the Bedouin. Up to June 2005, 100 counter claims were served regarding an area amounting to 85,000 dunams; in the meantime, verdicts have been handed down for 10 of the counter claims, relating to 10,000 dunams.

A Unique and Inferior Citizenship Status

The Bedouin in the Negev are unique not only in their having been transferred en masse to an area outside the area in which they lived prior to 1948, but also in the fact that they have a unique and inferior citizenship status. This is reflected, firstly, in the fact that the state communicates with its Bedouin citizens through mediating institutions set up especially for this purpose, which act independently and without coordination with other state institutions. Secondly, during most of the years since the establishment of the state, the Bedouin had no local government, not even in the recognized settlements. Finally the Bedouin did not enjoy – and some do not enjoy even today – basic civil rights like the right to vote and be elected to local office and the right to register their place of residence in their identity cards.

Special Mediating Institutions

Until 1966 the Bedouin in the Negev, like the rest of the Palestinians who became citizens of Israel, lived under military government. The military government generally served as the only representative of the government in all matters. For its part, the military governor did not communicate with Bedouin citizens as individuals, but rather through the mediation of the tribal sheiks. The status of the military government began to weaken in the 1960s, and it was abolished in 1966.

For the Bedouin, the place of the military government was taken by the Israel Lands Authority, created in 1960 as part of the Ministry of Agriculture. In 1986 a “Bedouin Authority” was established within the Israel Land Administration. Since that time, the Bedouin Authority has become the main governmental body charged with the responsibility for anything and everything affecting the 150,000 Bedouin residents of the Negev, in the recognized towns as well as in the unrecognized ones. Among others, the Bedouin Authority is responsible for planning and developing existing settlements, planning new settlements, allocating lands for public buildings, taking care of matters pertaining to agriculture, handling compromises on ownership claims, and allocating drinking water.

The Bedouin Authority has aroused considerable criticism, whether from the Bedouin or from human rights organizations. Recently a number of attempts have been made to abolish it or to reduce its authority. Thus, for example, the Israel National Security Council recommended that the powers of the Bedouin Authority be limited to matters of land ownership and that other powers be transferred to other agencies.

In addition to being responsible for the Bedouin Authority, the Israel Land Administration provides the main financing for the “Green Patrol,” a body charged with safeguarding state lands from trespassers. Among other things, the Green Patrol is infamous for destroying illegal structures built by Bedouin on lands claimed by the state and for seizing Bedouin flocks grazing on property considered as belonging to the state.

Another unique governing agency, set up especially for the Bedouin population, is the Bedouin Education Authority, created as part of the Ministry of Education in 1981. This body is responsible for education services in unrecognized villages. In practice, the Bedouin Education Authority has become the official ruling body in all matters of education affecting the Bedouin community. Recently the Ministry of Education has indicated that it intends to abolish the body, but as of writing it still exists.

Local Governments Ruled From the Outside

The unique civil status of the Bedouin is reflected in the fact that during most of the years that have elapsed since the establishment of the state, the Bedouin have not had their own local government. Until the establishment of government-created towns, they were ruled first by the military government and then by the Bedouin Authority. After their transfer to government towns, they found themselves under the rule of Jewish absentee office holders. In

two government-created towns, Tel Sheva (established in 1968) and Rahat (1971), the first municipal elections were held in 1993 and 1989, respectively. The other five towns held their first local elections only in 2000.

Citizens Without an Address

The State of Israel has yet to accord recognition to dozens of Bedouin settlements in the Negev (even those existing prior to 1948), and thus their names do not appear in the identification cards of their residents. In other words, at the present time, some 76,000 Israeli citizens have no address. Instead of an address, the residence of Bedouin citizens living in unrecognized settlements is indicated by the tribe to which they belong.

As mentioned above, residents of unrecognized settlements do not have the right to vote and to be elected to local public office, as they have no local governments. Even in cases in which Bedouin settlements are located within the confines of a Jewish local entity, Bedouin residents do not have the right to vote in elections or to be elected to office, even if they have to pay local taxes for lands leased for the purpose of cultivation.

Government-Created Towns: A Story of Under-Development

Today, slightly more than half of the Bedouin in the Negev live in seven recognized towns: Tel Sheva, Rahat, Kuseife, Arara, Hora, Segev Shalom, and Laqye. Despite the fact that most of these towns have been in existence for at least twenty years, they still lack appropriate infrastructures. They are unable to provide work for their residents or social services at a reasonable level. As such, they do not constitute a viable alternative for residents of unrecognized villages.

The recognized villages suffer from a number of outstanding disadvantages:

- Small area of jurisdiction, in comparison with Jewish localities in the Negev, which severely limits possibilities for development;
- The lowest municipal budgets in Israel;
- Significantly lower water allotments than neighboring Jewish localities;
- Sewerage infrastructures non-existent or inadequate;
- Inadequate interior road systems, which for some of the localities means no access to main arteries. All towns, with the exception of Rahat, have only one access road;
- Lack of internal or external public transportation services, thus severely limiting access to the labor market, to institutions of higher learning, to hospitals, to social services and to financial and governmental services;
- Lack of reliable telephone lines;
- Lack of public facilities like banks, public libraries, post offices, parking lots or community centers;
- A large number of classes (sometimes even whole schools) operating in temporary instead of permanent structures.

The situation of the recognized Bedouin towns has become a permanent topic of discussion at Cabinet meetings. In 2003, the Sharon administration made a commitment to implement a 6-year plan in the course of which the government was to invest 1.1 billion shekels in recognized Bedouin localities. However, almost 80% of this sum is no more than the regularly budgeted sums in the operating budgets of the various ministries. Furthermore, a good portion of the budget was allocated to law enforcement agencies like the Green Patrol. Finally, although the total commitment was not particularly high, only 37% of it was actually spent.

Unrecognized Villages: A Story of Invisible Citizens

Some 76,000 Bedouin citizens live in 45 settlements that have not been accorded recognition by the government and do not appear on official maps of Israel. Some of these settlements date back to the pre-1948 period and others were established in the 1950s, after the Bedouin tribes were displaced from the northwestern part of the Negev to the Sayig region.

The unrecognized settlements do not receive regular government services and they have no local government. Most of the homes and other buildings are not constructed of solid materials, for fear of their being dismantled by the authorities. In addition, the unrecognized villages lack public facilities and access roads. In about half of the households there is no running water and residents have to use a variety of methods to obtain water. The settlements are not connected to electricity, so that there are no refrigerators in most of the homes and there is no lighting in the streets. Likewise, the settlements lack a sewerage system, a fact that has severe environmental and sanitary implications. Open rivers of sewerage from neighboring Jewish towns traverse some of the settlements. None of the localities has a waste disposal system. Health care, education and social services are in poor shape: existing clinics provide only the most basic of services and they are few in number. Finally, schools and social services are of inferior quality.

In May 1997, residents of the unrecognized settlements established "The Regional Council for Unrecognized Villages" in response to a new master plan for the South that excluded the unrecognized settlements. The plan included removing some of the residents from their lands, and some of the Bedouin settlements stood to lose a considerable part of their territory. The Council was composed of heads of local village committees, and its purpose was to obtain recognition for the 45 unrecognized villages.

This action, along with the actions of additional Bedouin organizations and activists, resulted in a number of achievements: firstly, the Council constituted an important factor in the 2000 breakthrough decision made by the Barak administration, recognizing 9 out of the 45 unrecognized villages and establishing Regional Council Abu Basma as the local government for nine of the villages. In addition, the decision stipulated that the settlement of land disputes would no longer be a condition for the receipt of governmental services. Finally, it stated that residents of the unrecognized villages were to take part in the decisions affecting them.

The Bedouin organizations and activists became central partners in the legal proceedings against the master plan for the South. In 2000, with the help of the Israel Association for Civil Rights, residents of the unrecognized villages petitioned the High Court over exclusion of the villages from the plan. The Court issued a temporary injunction order instructing the National Council for Planning and Construction to go back to the drawing board and come up with a new plan that would include the unrecognized Bedouin villages. This was to be done in consultation with representatives of village residents, taking into account the alternative plan submitted by the Regional Council of the Unrecognized Villages in the Negev.

The High Court order and the decision of the Barak administration constitute important achievements. At the same time, five years have elapsed since those precedents were made without any progress on the ground. Moreover, it appears that the government has adopted the tactic of foot dragging. This is reflected in the slow pace at which the new regional master plan is being prepared, in contrast with the fast pace of implementation of another government decision - to establish dozens of Jewish settlements and farms in the Negev. In addition, the High Court recommendation that Bedouin residents be involved in the planning process has been adopted on a very limited scale.

The decision taken by the Sharon administration in September 2003 on a multiyear plan for the Bedouin in the Negev is the most recent decision on the matter. While this decision reiterated the decision of the Barak

administration to accord recognition to some of the villages and also mentioned the development of infrastructures and services, the central focus of the Sharon decision was law enforcement. Recently, a decision was made to set up new agencies to deal with enforcement of land ownership verdicts.

The Regional Council of Unrecognized Villages in the Negev perceived the Sharon plan as a “declaration of war” on residents of unrecognized villages, primarily because of its emphasis on law enforcement.

Insufficient Allocations, Insufficient Implementation

From Israel’s national budget, one may receive the erroneous impression that the government allocates significant sums to improving the situation of the Bedouin population of the Negev. However, the fact is that some of the sums allocated are not actually utilized. This is exemplified in the budget line for planning and development, which is supposed to include the establishment of new neighborhoods and the improvement of infrastructures in existing ones, under the budget of the Bedouin Authority. Over the years, the average implementation of this budget line has been no higher than 40%. As this is no secret to the authorities, the continued allocation of relatively large sums to the development of Bedouin localities is a sham.

Little Prospect for Self-Propelled Economic Development

During most of the 20th century the main source of livelihood for the Bedouin was agriculture. However, Bedouin agriculture experienced serious setbacks under Israeli rule. Firstly, the Bedouin lost a large portion of their lands when they were transferred to the Sayig area. Secondly, the Sayig lands are more arid than those in the northwestern Negev. Thirdly, the state views the Sayig lands as its own, and thus it allows cultivation only under conditions of leasing. This phenomenon is not limited to the Bedouin, as 93% of the land in Israel is owned by the state and most Jewish farmers also lease their land from the state; the difference is that while Jewish farmers lease the land for a period of 49 years, with the option of renewing the lease, and also have the possibility of leasing additional land under one-year contracts, the Bedouin have only one option, which is the annual lease. Thus every year Bedouin farmers need to ask the authorities for a renewal of their leases. There is always the possibility that the lease will not be renewed or that applicants will receive different plots.

Fourthly, Bedouin farmers receive smaller water allotments than their Jewish neighbors; some farmers do not receive any water allotment at all, and they have no choice but to pay for the water they use at household rates, which are 3.5 times higher than agricultural ones. Bedouin farmers do not receive the government subsidies that Jewish farmers receive in drought years.

As a result of their inability to make a living from agriculture alone, during the period of the British Mandate, Bedouin also sought work as hired laborers. Between 1948 and 1966, the Bedouin were under military rule that kept them more or less confined to the Sayig area. Every exit necessitated obtaining a permit from the military government. The policy of giving out permits took into account, among other things, the economic interests of the Jewish population: during most of the 1950s, unemployment in the Negev was very high, and the authorities feared that the Bedouin, who worked for low wages and had no labor protection, would take away the jobs of Jewish immigrants. Only when Jewish employers had difficulty obtaining Jewish laborers, did they turn to the military governor for labor power. Then Bedouin found jobs in road construction, agriculture, and extractive industries. Very few were employed as semi-skilled laborers (carpenters, mechanics and the like).

During the same period, the Bedouin resorted to smuggling as a source of income. However, this source dried up after the 1967 war, with Israel’s occupation of the West Bank, the Gaza Strip and the Sinai Peninsula.

Business activity among the Bedouin is extremely limited. Bedouin towns lack the proper infrastructures that might provide employment opportunities. Despite the fact that they are the poorest localities in Israel, Bedouin towns do

not have the status of "Development Area A," which bestows tax breaks on investors. Existing business firms are small and their effect on employment rates is negligent. Corporations with plants in the Negev, like Motorola and the Dead Sea Works, employ very few Bedouin, if any at all. Employment in the military does not constitute a significant employment alternative either. The number of Bedouin youth who volunteer is not more than a few hundred, and they constitute a minority among their age cohort. The armed forces do not provide a significant contribution to the employment opportunities of those who complete three years of voluntary military service, either, as their military professions are of little use in the civilian labor market.

The Employment Picture

Not many figures are available on the employment patterns of Bedouin. Residents of unrecognized villages are not even included in the annual samples of the Labor Force Surveys of the Central Bureau of Statistics. In the framework of this study, we performed an analysis of the employment situation of Bedouin in the Negev, based on the Labor Force Survey of 2003 for residents of recognized towns.

Our analysis shows that in 2003, 64% of persons aged 15 years of age and over were in the labor force (labor force = employed persons + persons looking for work), a proportion similar to that of Jews in the Beer Sheba district (60%). However, while unemployment for Jews was 11.6%, unemployment for Bedouin was 34.7%.

Finally, we found that wages were lower for Bedouin: the Bedouin settlements are at the bottom of the wage ladder, though it should be noted that average wages in Bedouin localities are not much lower than average wages in Jewish development towns in the Negev.

<https://ir.lawnet.fordham.edu/cgi/viewcontent.cgi?referer=&httpsredir=1&article=2297&context=ilj>

Abstract

In Part I, this Note elaborates on the rights that indigenous persons have to ancestral land and the sources of international law that support those rights. Part I also discusses the alternative dispute resolution process of mediation and the customary discouragement of mediation between parties with a power imbalance. Part II explores whether the Negev Bedouins and Israeli government should pursue mediation to resolve their land dispute and generally addresses techniques used to monitor mediation sessions between parties with a power imbalance. Part III explores why mediation is better suited to resolve the Israeli government-Negev Bedouin land dispute than is courtroom litigation.

"Inquire of your companion before choosing the route." -Bedouin Proverb

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INTRODUCTION	

The United Nations ("UN") Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues estimates that there are more than 370 million indigenous persons worldwide.² Indigenous persons are often defined as those having traditional lifestyles and residing on ancestral land.³ Though native persons reside on lands that their ancestors have passed down for generations, the states that emerge on ancestral land often create systems of land ownership in which indigenous persons are not participants. In the resulting conflict of ownership, state governments often attempt to disrupt native ways of life and unilaterally control land that indigenous persons perceive to be their own.⁴

State governments are naturally wealthier and more powerful than indigenous communities.⁵ Therefore, when conflict arises between a state government and an indigenous population, the government party is able to exert control over the indigenous party and dominate the processes that adjudicate indigenous persons' rights.⁶

The Negev Desert, a region in southern Israel, is home to over 50,000 Negev Bedouins who maintain villages on their ancestral land.⁷ The Negev Bedouins have not successfully secured government-recognized land rights to the desert their ancestors have lived on for centuries and have passed down to them.⁸ The indigenous Bedouin population and the Israeli government compete for the Negev Desert in the sense that each party envisions a different use for the Negev. The Bedouins wish to live, cultivate, and graze on the land, as their ancestors did; the Israeli government would prefer to develop the land into prime real estate.⁹ Due to the actions of both parties, the conflict has escalated in recent years; particularly, the Israeli government has demolished Bedouin homes and destroyed hundreds of acres of Bedouin-grown crops in an effort to convince the Bedouin population to respect government policies and relocate from their ancestral land.¹⁰

In 2007, the Consensus Building Institute ("CBI"), after conducting field research in the region, proposed that the Israeli government and Negev Bedouin community pursue mediation to resolve their dispute for land.¹¹ Mediation is a short-term, structured, task-oriented, and participatory alternative dispute resolution ("ADR") process in which parties and a neutral third-party mediator work toward the resolution of a conflict.¹² According to mediation custom, however, parties with a relationship that is characterized by hostility and an imbalance of power are discouraged from pursuing mediation³ because the more powerful party may intentionally, or even unintentionally, control the mediation process, precluding a fair and safe mediation process.¹⁴

This Note examines whether the Negev Bedouins and the Israeli government should pursue mediation to resolve their land dispute, given that the existing power imbalance begs the question of whether reaching a fair settlement is possible. For insight into the use of mediation for parties that have a deep-rooted power imbalance, this Note draws on the use of mediation in another context involving persistent power imbalances: partnerships among individuals with a history of domestic violence. Although domestic relationships are not strictly analogous to the relationship between a state and an indigenous population, victims of domestic violence and indigenous persons face similar obstacles in pursuing mediation. A victim of domestic violence, like an indigenous population, may hesitate to represent his or her true feelings and concerns in fear of the abusive party, and therefore lose bargaining power during the mediation session. However, mediation customs also reveal that if mediators are prepared to safeguard the weaker party's rights and employ premediation screening and safe mediation techniques throughout the process, parties with a power imbalance need not avoid mediation.⁵ Given that safe mediation methods are available for parties with a power imbalance and the notable inadequacies of litigation in the context of upholding indigenous population's rights, this Note encourages the Negev Bedouins and the Israeli government to pursue mediation to resolve their dispute over the Negev Desert.

In Part I, this Note elaborates on the rights that indigenous persons have to ancestral land and the sources of international law that support those rights. Part I also discusses the alternative dispute resolution process of mediation and the customary discouragement of mediation between parties with a power imbalance. Part II explores whether the Negev Bedouins and Israeli government should pursue mediation to resolve their land dispute and generally addresses techniques used to monitor mediation sessions between parties with a power imbalance.

Part III explores why mediation is better suited to resolve the Israeli government-Negev Bedouin land dispute than is courtroom litigation.

..... see the URL reference to read the rest of this article or internet search for the title of this article.

NZ Early European settlement

<https://www.britannica.com/place/New-Zealand/Early-European-settlement>

Apart from convicts escaping from [Australia](#) and shipwrecked or deserting sailors seeking asylum with Māori tribes, the first Europeans in New Zealand were in search of profits—from sealskins, timber, New Zealand flax (genus *Phormium*), and [whaling](#). Australian firms set up tiny settlements of land-based bay whalers, and Kororareka (now called [Russell](#)), in the northeastern [North Island](#), became a stopping place for American, British, and French deep-sea whalers. Traders supplying whalers drew Māori into their economic activity, buying provisions and supplying trade goods, [implements](#), muskets, and rum. Initially the [Māori](#) welcomed the newcomers; while the tribes were secure, the European was a useful dependent.

Māori went overseas, some as far as England. A northern chief, Hongi Hika, amassed presents in England and exchanged them in Australia for muskets; back in New [Zealand](#) he waged devastating war on traditional enemies. The use of firearms spread southward; a series of tribal wars, spreading from north to south, displaced populations and disturbed landholdings, especially in the [Waikato](#), [Taranaki](#), and [Cook Strait](#) areas. Europeans soon founded colonies in these unsettled regions. [Missionaries](#) quickly followed the traders. Between 1814 and 1838, Anglicans, Wesleyan Methodists, and Roman Catholics set up mission stations. [Conversion](#) was initially slow, but by the mid-19th century most Māori were adherents, for varying reasons, of some form of Christianity.

All of these newcomers had a profound effect on [Māori](#) life. Warfare and disease reduced numbers, while new values, pursuits, and beliefs modified tribal structures. Christianity cut across the sanctions and prohibitions that had supplied Māori social cohesion. A capitalist economy, to which Māori were introduced both by traders offering new inducements (for instance, the brief demand for New Zealand flax) and by missionaries bringing new agricultural techniques, affected the whole material basis of life. At first in the north and later over the whole [country](#), a process of adjustment began, which has continued to the present day. By the late 1830s, chiefly through the Australian link, New Zealand had been joined to Europe. Settlers numbered at least some hundreds, and there were certain to be more. Colonization schemes were afoot in Great Britain, and Australian graziers were buying land from the Māori. These circumstances determined [British](#) policy.

Annexation and further settlement

In 1838 the British government decided upon at least partial annexation. In 1839 it [commissioned](#) William Hobson, a naval officer, as lieutenant governor and consul to the Māori chiefs, and he annexed the whole country: the North Island by the right of cession from the Māori chiefs and the [South Island](#) by the right of discovery. At first New Zealand was legally part of the [New South Wales](#) colony (in Australia), but in 1841 it became a separate crown colony, and Hobson was named governor. Before declaring the annexation of New Zealand, Hobson went through a process of discussion with the northern chiefs from which emerged the [Treaty of Waitangi](#) (February 1840). Under the Treaty the [Māori](#) ceded *kāwanatanga* (translated as “sovereignty,” but its meaning is much debated) to the crown in return for protection and guaranteed possession of their lands; they also agreed to sell land only to the crown. Hobson promised an investigation into past “sales” of land to private individuals to ensure fair dealing. This treaty imposed a strong [moral](#) obligation upon the British government to act as guardian of the Māori.

Even before annexation was proclaimed, planning for the first English colony had begun. The New Zealand Company, founded in 1839 to colonize on the principles laid down by [Edward Gibbon](#)

[Wakefield](#), sent a survey ship, the *Tory*, in May 1839. The agents on board were to buy land in both islands around Cook Strait. The company moved hastily because its founders were aware that British annexation was likely and would entail a crown monopoly of land sales and a consequent increase in price. Purchases were effected in great haste before Hobson could bring to an end such private transactions. Little effort was made to seek out the true Māori owners; this would have been difficult anyway, as Māori ownership was communal and titles had been disturbed by the warfare of the preceding quarter century. The company, combining skillful [propaganda](#) with outright trickery and brutality, enforced its claim to the land upon which [New Plymouth](#), [Whanganui](#), and [Wellington](#) in the North Island and [Nelson](#) in the South Island were founded in the 1840s. Later, through the crown, it secured other areas in the South Island where [Otago](#) (1848) and [Canterbury](#) (1850) were settled by separate associations. Meanwhile, Hobson moved the seat of government south from the [Bay of Islands](#), bringing [Auckland](#) into existence (1840).

In the early 1840s settlement and government began to alarm the Māori. In the Cook Strait area a [formidable](#) chief, Te Rauparaha, obstructed settlement. Near the Bay of Islands there was open warfare, and Kororareka was repeatedly raided. Neither Hobson (who died in 1842) nor his successor, [Robert FitzRoy](#), was able to overcome the Māori. [George \(later Sir George\) Grey](#), who became governor in 1845, had money and troops and the will to use them. His victories brought a peace that lasted from 1847 until 1860. Hōne Heke, the principal leader in the north, was thoroughly defeated (1846), and in the south a likely uprising was prevented. Ethnic strife had been accompanied by economic distress. In the mid-1840s the [nascent](#) economy was depressed until the Australian gold rushes of the 1850s offered a [market](#) for foodstuffs to the New Zealand farmer, settler and Māori alike.



[Sir George Grey](#)

Sir George Grey, detail of an engraving by W.W. Alais, c. 1861.

Courtesy of The Mitchell Library, Sydney

By the end of the 1840s ethnic and economic trouble had given way to political agitation. The leading settlements, apart from Auckland, began to campaign for representative government in place of Grey's personal rule. He, while refusing to give way, helped to draft the New Zealand [Constitution Act](#) of 1852, which was designed to meet all demands of the settlers. Grey sought not to prevent the introduction of self-government but to [delay](#) it until he had determined both native and land policy. He wanted to begin the rapid assimilation of the Māori (with whom his relations were excellent) to British social and cultural patterns and to introduce a land policy that would safeguard the small farmer against the large landowner. He believed he had secured these goals by the time of his departure at the end of 1853.

Responsible government

After the [Constitution Act](#) came into force in 1853, New Zealand was divided into six provinces—Auckland, [New Plymouth](#) (Taranaki), [Wellington](#), [Nelson](#), [Canterbury](#), and Otago—each with a

superintendent and a provincial council. The central government consisted of a governor and a two-chamber legislature (General Assembly): a Legislative Council nominated by the [crown](#), and a House of Representatives elected upon a low property franchise for a five-year term. This General Assembly did not meet until 1854; it then embarked on a quarrel with the acting governor, Col. Robert Henry Wynyard, that was not ended until the achievement of full responsible government—i.e., a system under which the governor could act in domestic matters only upon the advice of ministers enjoying the confidence of the elected chamber. [Henry Sewell](#) and James FitzGerald, of Canterbury, led the representatives in this struggle; heading the opposition against them was [Edward Gibbon Wakefield](#), who, having first moved the resolution for responsible government, then secretly opposed it while serving as extra-official adviser to the acting governor. The Colonial Office (which oversaw the government of [Britain's](#) overseas territories) [conceded](#) responsible government in 1856. The next governor, Thomas (later Sir Thomas) Gore Browne, reserved Māori affairs to the control of the governor alone.

For most purposes, during the 1850s New Zealand was administered not by central but by provincial institutions. These authorities (10 in number by the time of their abolition in 1876) directly affected settlers through their administration of land and control of immigration and [public works](#). The native department, directly under the governor, bought land from the [Māori](#); the provincial governments settled it, regulated immigration, and built roads and bridges. Until the wars of the 1860s, the central legislature was less important, though its ultimate authority remained.

Each province made use of revenue arising from land sales and depended on that revenue for its strength. Canterbury and [Otago](#), with small Māori populations, [cultivated](#) prosperity by spending that revenue on communications, immigration, and education. Other provinces were either less fortunate or less wise and enjoyed less success. In the [North Island](#) the numerous and anxious Māori held on to desirable land. Here most of the land available for settlement had been taken up by the end of the 1850s, a good deal of it by speculators, and some of it was given away to attract immigrants. The island remained largely without roads until the 1870s, so impecunious were its governments. But by that time the major obstacle to settlement—the continuing power of the tribes—had been removed. This was the result of a decade of war.

Ethnic conflict

In the 1850s [relations](#) between settlers and [Māori](#) deteriorated. The settler population and the demand for land, especially pastoral land, increased. Many Māori, fearing for their future, became reluctant to sell more land. In the [Taranaki](#) province, where the land shortage was [acute](#), both settlers and those Māori willing to sell were opposed by [Wiremu Kīngi](#) (Te Rangitāake), chief of Te Ātiawa. In the [Waikato](#), where good land was coveted by settlers and speculators, an elderly chief, Te Wherowhero, became “king” in 1858, largely through the support of the Waikato and Maniopotō tribes, and reigned as King [Pōtatau I](#). The [Māori King Movement](#) and the unrest in the Taranaki headed by Wiremu Kīngi (the two movements remained distinct though related) were opposed to further land sales.



Tūkāroto Matutaera Pōtatau Te Wherowhero Tāwhiao

Tūkāroto Matutaera Pōtatau Te Wherowhero Tāwhiao, the second Māori king (1860–94).

Frank and Frances Carpenter Collection/Library of Congress, Washington, D.C. (LC-USZ62-109768)

The likelihood of conflict was not reduced by any particular wisdom in government policy. [Gore Browne](#) was guided in native policy by the head of the Native Land Purchase Department, Donald (later Sir Donald) McLean, who, responsive to settler demands, increased pressure on potential sellers. Grey's caution and his recognition that a chief could veto sales proposed by any section of his tribe were forgotten. McLean [sowed](#) a rich harvest of distrust. Christopher Richmond, the member of the cabinet in charge of native affairs, was also a member of the House of Representatives from Taranaki and was fully responsive to the needs of his settler neighbours. The central ministry, theoretically unconcerned with native policy, could not, despite the promise of protection made to the Māori in the Treaty of Waitangi, neglect a matter so vital to the colony's future. In 1859 the representative of the crown unwittingly supplied the occasion for the outbreak of civil strife.

Gore Browne accepted an offer to sell from a Taranaki subchief, Te Teira, and ignored the veto [imposed](#) by the paramount chief, Wiremu Kīngi. Early in 1860 troops were used to dislodge Kīngi from the land in question, the Waitara block. A decade of [fighting](#) began. In 1861 Grey was sent back for a second term as governor in the hope that he would again prove to be a peacemaker. In fact he accelerated the extension of conflict. Fearing that [Auckland](#) was menaced by the followers of the Māori king, he took defensive measures that could easily be interpreted as acts of aggression, and the fighting subsequently spread from Taranaki to the Waikato. Imperial troops, colonial militia, and Māori allies (for not all the tribes supported the Māori nationalist movement) had no easy task, but their victory could not be postponed for long. By the mid-1860s Māori resistance in the Taranaki and Waikato had ended. But the "king" tribes were by no means crushed, and the fear that they would embark on war again haunted the colony for many years.

In the later 1860s the fighting was of a different character, in which religion acted as a last, desperate stiffener of [Māori](#) resistance. Pai Mārire ([Hauhauism](#)), an amalgam of Jewish, Christian, and native beliefs, was the first (1862) of many movements in which the Māori, rejecting the religion of settler and missionary, put their own imprint on Christianity. Toward the end of the

decade, [Te Kooti](#) organized resistance on the east coast of the North Island. He was the founder of another religious movement as well as a guerrilla of some note; his [adaptation](#) of Christianity, [Ringatū](#), still has numerous followers. Te Kooti was never finally defeated, but by the early 1870s he had been forced to retreat into the “King Country” (the centre of the island), and he devoted the rest of his life to religious leadership.

An uneasy peace settled on the colony in 1870. Casualties had not been high, but the loss of life was serious for the tribes concerned. Especially in those areas in which the Māori king retained some authority, defeat led to a period of [withdrawal](#) from settler society. Resentment was deepened by a punitive policy of land confiscation adopted by the victors, a policy improper in its nature and made worse in some places by indiscriminating application to “guilty” and “innocent” tribes alike. The Māori future looked bleak. By the [Native Land Act](#) of 1862, private land transactions between settler and Māori had been legalized, and during the next 40 years the Māori lost most of their best land. In 1867 four seats in the General Assembly were created for Māori members and Māori men gained the vote, but many years were to elapse before Māori numbers, morale, and confidence would [revive](#) throughout the [country](#).

Development of the colony

Fluctuation of the economy

Economic growth in the [North Island](#) had been considerably retarded by the wars. Meanwhile, the [South Island](#), especially [Canterbury](#) and [Otago](#), had grown increasingly prosperous. Pastoral farming expanded steadily, and the discovery of gold, first in Otago and then on the west coast, led to a sudden boom in production and trade. Population rose when diggers poured in; economic life quickened as gold brought prosperity, less to the diggers than to bankers, merchants, land sellers, and farmers supplying provisions. The South Island share of the European population jumped from about 40 percent to 60 percent during the 1860s. The North Island did not recover its previous lead until the 20th century.

Attempts by other provinces to [emulate](#) the development of Canterbury and Otago normally ended in embarrassment (in one case in bankruptcy) as money was recklessly borrowed and spent. To preserve the colony’s reputation, the central government in 1867 banned further provincial overseas borrowing. About that time economic [depression](#) struck the greater part of the [country](#), especially the South Island, where the accessible alluvial gold had been worked out. The South Island was thus looking for a stimulus, while the ending of the wars now made further development possible in the North Island. It was widely agreed that only the central government could adequately revitalize the economy.

In 1870 a development policy was provided by [Julius \(later Sir Julius\) Vogel](#), who at the time was colonial treasurer and who later served twice (1873–75; 1876) as premier. He was convinced (not altogether accurately) that New Zealand was bursting with potential resources needing no more than the [stimulus](#) of capital and labour for their exploitation. He borrowed overseas capital for [public works](#) on an unprecedented scale and swelled the [labour force](#) with British immigrants whose passage had been subsidized by the government.

Not all of Vogel’s schemes were wisely conceived; the prosperity of the mid-1870s was more an investment boom than a solid growth of productivity. But the colony ended the decade with a doubled population (about 500,000) and the beginnings of efficient internal and external communications. Roads, bridges, railways, and telegraph systems had been built and overseas shipping services improved. Private lending agencies contributed to the boom; in a heady atmosphere land values and interest rates climbed alarmingly. The [public debt](#) greatly increased, and many people who had acquired land were in desperate financial straits. Falling overseas prices

for farm products (chiefly wool and wheat), a declining gold output, retrenchment by the government, and widespread unemployment marked the 1880s. Immigrant ships discharged their passengers at ports where unemployment was already rife. There had been growth in the 1870s, but it was succeeded by a depression that lasted until 1895.

Vogel abolished the provincial governments in 1876. They had earned his [enmity](#) by refusing to allow their lands to be used as security for public works and by blocking a forest-conservation scheme. Essentially, they had become outmoded when in the early 1870s the [initiative](#) in development passed to the central government. Provincial governments had been set up to colonize their districts; when the centre assumed this function, they lost their *raison d'être*. Abolition came fairly painlessly; it was an affront more to local pride than to local prosperity. Only in Otago was there a strong attempt to resist change. Thereafter, provincial interests were long pursued by the respective delegates in the General Assembly, whose achievements were in no way diminished by the lack of particularist (provincial) institutions.

The governments of the 1880s, though led by men of some ability and imagination, such as [Sir Robert Stout](#) and [Sir Harry Atkinson](#), did not deal effectively with the depression. The time-honoured remedy, spending loan money on development, was not fully given up until 1887. The basic problem was to find productive work for the country's labour force; closer land settlement was the remedy suggested in the 1880s and applied in the 1890s. Great areas, especially in the South Island, had fallen to large owners; these "monopolists" were attacked by the radicals, though probably the [pastoral](#) industry could not have been established under any other system. William Rolleston, minister of lands in the early 1880s, first proposed that the state help men to become small farmers as state [tenants](#); [John \(later Sir John\) McKenzie](#) and the Liberal government applied that remedy with vigour in the 1890s. But closer settlement and [intensive farming](#) did not of themselves create economic benefits, which in fact could not [accrue](#) until small farmers had a product to export and gained a good price for that product. Refrigeration and rising world prices provided the answer. It became possible in the 1880s to send to Great Britain refrigerated cargoes of butter, cheese, and meat; this encouraged the spread of small-scale intensive farming.

NZ **Imagining Decolonisation**

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Decolonisation is a term that alarms some, and gives hope to others. It is an uncomfortable and often bewildering concept for many New Zealanders. This book seeks to demystify decolonisation using illuminating, real-life examples. By exploring the impact of colonisation on Māori and non-Māori alike, Imagining Decolonisation presents a transformative vision of a country that is fairer for all.

SUBJECTS

Decolonisation; Colonialism; Maori (New Zealand people) -- Colonization

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In: Negotiating Boundaries in Multicultural Societies

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Abstract/Excerpt

Settler societies are characterised by complex relations between settlers, indigenous peoples, and migrants. These relationships involve contestations over the rights of indigenous peoples, the place of ethnic minorities, and the position of settlers in *de facto* post-colonising settings. In Aotearoa, New Zealand, these tensions are overtly encapsulated in the contested ‘isms’ of biculturalism and multiculturalism. Adopted in the 1980s in response to the indigenous sovereignty movement, biculturalism stipulates equal partnership between Anglo settlers (Pakeha) and Indigenous Maori. Since then it has become the national governance framework of Aotearoa, New Zealand and an integral part of the decolonising imaginary of the country. At the same time though, a rapid increase in immigration has brought multiculturalism as a possible alternative to biculturalism to the fore, leading to debates about the compatibility of the two paradigms. In this chapter, I focus on the majority group of Pakeha and their position as stakeholders vis-à-vis bi- and multiculturalism. Drawing on thirty-eight life story interviews with Pakeha in New Zealand’s largest city, Auckland, I argue that respondents employ the globally hegemonic rhetoric of liberal multiculturalism as a discursive strategy to dismiss the continued relevance of settler colonialism and justify sustained patterns of ethnic inequalities. A number of specific discursive tropes will be presented and discussed as contemporary expressions of settler colonialism: Firstly, I will critically discuss the importance of temporality for advancing the settler colonial project. In this context, I will examine discourses in which respondents confine indigeneity to the realm of the past in order to progress to a less threatening multicultural future. Secondly, I will examine the discursive erasure of differences between Maori and migrants as a strategy to reject indigenous rights and to render coloniality irrelevant.

Outrage at injustice An education in white brutality Anthony Martin Fernando and Australian Aboriginal rights

Outrage at injustice CHAPTER ELEVEN An education in white brutality Anthony Martin Fernando and Australian Aboriginal rights in transnational context

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In January 1929, an Aboriginal man appeared before the Old Bailey in London, accused of brandishing a pistol at a white man. He defended his actions on the grounds that he had been subjected to intolerable racism, claiming to have been taunted for being black. Confident and well spoken, Anthony Martin Fernando advised the court that his early years in Australia had instilled in him little confidence either in white people or in British law. Although he had been witness to the murder of an Aborigine by two men in 1880s Australia, he said that he had been barred from giving evidence, and the murderers were set free. Despairing of a future in his own country, he left soon afterwards, destined to spend the rest of his days overseas.

This chapter investigates Fernando's life of self-imposed exile and his overseas protests concerning the failure of British justice in Australia. From his early adulthood in the 1880s until his death in 1949, Fernando sought to bring international attention to Aboriginal rights. In England and across continental Europe, he engaged in street protest, wrote for daily newspapers, approached international networks and organisations for assistance, and (as the opening lines of this chapter illustrate) used the courtroom as a site from which to disseminate information about the injustices faced by his people. His life provides significant counter-evidence to the notion that independent travel between Britain, Europe and the Australian colonies was the domain solely of the white imperialist. Moreover, his mobility and speech contradict the idea that the Aborigine historically has been the object of the European gaze, lacking the capacity to participate first hand in self-representation in Europe.

Fernando is an exceptional figure in Australian Aboriginal history because of the non-coerced travelling and political activities he first engaged in during the late nineteenth century. In contrast, since the early days of colonisation Aboriginal people had been presented for European consumption as evidence of the success of white civilisation in the Australian colonies. Only four years after the setting up of the colony, Bennelong, an Aboriginal leader from Port Jackson in Sydney, travelled to London in 1792 with Governor Phillip. He later returned to the colonies where he offered commentary on the relative merits of his own and European culture.' In 1846 Governor Eyre presented Queen Victoria with two South Australian Aboriginal boys as examples of the potential of their race to respond to uplift and in the hope that greater attention would be paid to Aboriginals' place within the British Empire.'

While such living 'specimens of English manners' of the eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries were admired for their mastery of English and for their gentlemanly demeanour, by the late nineteenth century they seemed representatives of a doomed race. The rapid decrease in Aboriginal numbers, especially of the Tasmanian Aborigines (who were considered to have recently died out) appeared to confirm that these most primitive of peoples would

pass inevitably into oblivion.' No doubt, for many of those English and Europeans who met Fernando in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, Aborigines had been little more than skeletons on display in their museums or among those circus troops they saw performing in their city.' By living among Europeans, Fernando reversed the imperial order. Furthermore, by drawing attention to white agency in the purported demise of his race, he revealed that colonialism, not the Aborigines, was the uncivilised other within the British imperial world.

Recent transnational histories have shown that numbers of non-white subjects similarly travelled Europe in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries, participating in debates about their own rights.⁶ They were, in Antoinette Burton's words, 'negotiating power across a variety of national—political boundaries, both imagined and real';⁷ and the historian Paul Gilroy has described such negotiators of imperial and colonial geopolitics as agents in European history.⁸ Until now indigenous people from Australia have not been recognised as participants in this global movement. As I will show, Fernando was perhaps first among the Aboriginal people personally engaged in this transnational critique of the Empire. As he confronted authorities with his account of life as an Aboriginal British Australian, Fernando's protest disturbed — as it continues to do — Australian settler colonialism's claim to historical insularity from overseas criticism, most particularly that voiced by indigenous Australians.

According to Fernando's testimony, he was born in Woolloomooloo on 6 April 1864. An important gathering place for a range of local language groups, Woolloomooloo was in the country of the Cadigal, a fishing people who lived on the southern banks of Sydney Cove. Tragically, by 1791, only a few years after first 'settlement', the devastating effects of conflict, disease and starvation had reduced their population to only three.⁹ Thus Fernando's mother is likely to have been a member of the Dharuk, whose hunting and fishing grounds extended from Sydney northwards into the highly fertile Hawkesbury region. Although similarly suffering from the combination of violence, disease and loss of hunting grounds, the Dharuk survived in sufficient numbers to perpetuate their presence in the area to the present.

In common with many generations of mixed-descent Aboriginal people taken from their mothers at an early age, Fernando's pride in his Aboriginal identity was linked to the maternal rather than the paternal. Much of his childhood, Fernando explained, had been spent apart from his mother, for he had been 'taken away' as a young boy.¹³ It may be that he was removed by force to work for a white family as a house servant, even a companion, or that he was given over to indentured employment.¹⁴ Many such children were educated by white people intent on 'civilising' them. Or Fernando may have been educated at the Black Town Native Institution, taken into this boarding school run by members of the local Christian Missionary Society mainly for mixed-descent children.¹⁵ If his mother had hoped thereby to equip him for life under colonial rule, her strategy was successful. Those who met Fernando in adult life described him as educated, well-spoken and able to quote extensively from the Bible.¹⁶ Sadly, Fernando made his way back to his community only after his mother's death, a loss that remained a source of grief, as well as of inspiration, throughout his life. His recollection of her became his 'guiding star'.¹⁷

Although he later referred to his people as the Aborigines of Australia, Fernando never discussed his paternal lineage. Silence concerning an absent father has been typical of many Aboriginals of mixed descent in Australia, for most white fathers abandoned any offspring they had with Aboriginal women. This gendered effect of interracial contact became a cornerstone of racial science and racial policy. Where paternity became increasingly important in determining citizenship status from the late nineteenth century onwards, in settler Australia the authorities emphasised maternity as the defining feature of Aboriginal identity. Maternal blood inheritance and the cultural and social influence of Aboriginal mothers were used to justify the removal of mixed-descent children from their communities. Following protective¹⁸ legislation instigated by colonial governments from the 1880s on, such children were increasingly taken away by the authorities in order to be 'merged into white', usually through unpaid work.

In Fernando's case, silence about paternity further complicates this history. Firstly, he asserted that 'Fernando' was not his birth surname. While working as a mechanic in Milan at the turn of the last century, he honoured the friendly

Italian people (who were therefore unlike British Australians) by taking an ordinary Italian name as his surname. Determining one's own name is a highly political act, especially for an Aboriginal man who had left Australia at a time when demeaning or mocking names were often given to Aboriginal workers by their white masters and mistresses. Having not two but three names marked Anthony Martin Fernando apart from the majority of Aboriginal people of his own generation in colonial Australia.

Secondly, Fernando's two first two names yield a possible Caribbean connection. According to James Kohen, a historian of early New South Wales, Martin is the name of a long-standing African-Aboriginal lineage in Australia. John Martin was a Caribbean convict transported from Britain on the First Fleet in 1788. He and a number of his descendants raised children with Dharuk women over the following generations.²¹ Perhaps Fernando was silent on his paternity because being both Aboriginal and African created difficulties for a young man living in late nineteenth-century Australia. Unlike Africans, the Aborigines had been found to be proto-Caucasians and thus amenable to biological absorption without throw-back (hence the removal of mixed-descent children). Yet, contradictorily, the Tasmanian Aborigines had been explained in terms of their negroid origins. The dissonance that an Aboriginal-Caribbean racial could represent to contemporary authorities is well illustrated by the diverse approaches of Governor Eyre to the Aborigines in South Australia and the Caribbeans in Jamaica under his control in the mid-late nineteenth century: while he considered that the former should be protected, the 'excitable indolence' of the latter required violent repression.

Living among Aboriginal people who had witnessed extraordinary changes in their world, Fernando no doubt learned at an early age to doubt the civilising effects of colonisation. Aboriginal people in his immediate community undoubtedly spoke of the horrifying smallpox epidemic in 1789 (estimated to have resulted in a 50-90 per cent drop in the Aboriginal population in and around Sydney) or of the violence and loss they had experienced since the white sails of the European boats had first been sighted. In the face of such rupture, some Aboriginal people living in close proximity to whites re-articulated their status as civilised savages through carnivalesque or pantomime appropriations of colonial power. In the earliest years of colonisation, Bungaree donned a soldier's uniform and welcomed ships arriving in Sydney to his land: a local landmark, and for many colonists their first personal encounter with the natives, he would board each ship demanding payment for bringing it safely to shore.²⁵ Several decades later, African convict Billy Blue, 'commodore' of the local ferry service, demanded similar recognition of his status.²⁶ In each case, performance anchored the negotiation of colonial rule. No doubt well aware of such legendary figures, Fernando would later apply this embodied black politics in his street protests in Europe.

Fernando did not have to wait until he travelled abroad to meet with people from around the world: sailors from Africa and the Caribbean regularly arrived in ships engaged in sugar trading. The editor of New South Wales' first newspaper, George Howe, was a Caribbean; among those in the early township on whom he reported were Chinese and Muslims conducting their religious rituals.²⁷ Sydney attracted also a wide array of Europeans. Accounts by French, Spanish, Russian and other residents often reflected their authors' fascination with local Aborigines.²⁸ What of the curiosity of Aboriginal people about this cosmopolitan array? At one level, those Europeans confirmed the larger colonial and imperial frameworks under which Aboriginal people lived in Australia; at another, they provided glimpses of cultures, languages, and places far away.

As Fernando explained, while working as a young railwayman he had witnessed the murder of an Aboriginal man and attempted to give evidence against the two white men accused of the crime.²⁹ In doing so he had been trying to exercise rights only recently formally extended to Aboriginal people in Australia: in 1876, the New South Wales Evidence Amendment Act made provision for witnesses to give evidence without oath, and Aborigines, previously considered unable to comprehend the magnitude of testifying before God, could no longer be legally precluded as witnesses.³⁰ The double injustice of being denied his right to give evidence, resulting in the freeing of the white men accused, convinced Fernando to leave Australia and inspired his determination to speak whenever he could about the suffering of his people.

If that experience had been the impetus for Fernando's departure, how he was able to leave Australia remains a mystery. For white people, travel was relatively easy in the late nineteenth century as passports and other identity documents became essential only in the post-First World War era, meaning that Australian passports did not exist until after 1948;³¹ even as late as the 1910s, English travellers sailing from Britain to Australia required only a certificate of identity.³² For Aboriginal people, travel was an entirely different matter. Living under increasing legislation designed to restrict their movement within the colonies, they were necessarily restricted from departing the country's shores. It was surely no coincidence that independent travel became one of Fernando's greatest pleasures and political tools, and he guarded it jealously. Fernando likely left New South Wales as an engineer on a ship ³⁴ Here his (possible) connection with Africans and Caribbeans working on the wharves and on ships in Port Jackson would have been useful, as Fernando could have been taken for one of them.

However it was that Fernando made his way overseas, it is clear that he was an extraordinarily mobile and active individual. Various official and personal reports testify that he had been a trader in jewellery in South-East Asia before living and working in Italy; after imprisonment in Austria, he went to England, then Switzerland, Germany, Italy again, finally being deported to England, where he was living still in 1929. During these years outside of Australia, he apparently taught himself many languages, and worked variously as a cook, a mechanic or an engineer, a toy-maker and a street-hawker.

While Fernando no doubt lacked Aboriginal compatriots in Europe, he encountered there a large diaspora of black people, mainly from the crown colonies, most of whose communities had lived — or still did — under slavery or its threat. At the end of the nineteenth century, considerable numbers of West Africans and Caribbeans were living in Europe. The majority were sailors; others were entertainers (including some African-Americans), labourers and ex-soldiers³⁵ Most faced poverty, living in slum areas in port towns, particularly (by the early twentieth century) Liverpool and Cardiff, in England and Wales, where they had to contend with endemic discrimination and racial vilification. White violence against them flared in 1919 as their manpower, welcomed during the war, was now considered to threaten the postwar employment of whites.³⁶ It is likely that some Aboriginal soldiers also remained in London after demobilisation, and along with Fernando, became part of Britain's black population.³⁷ As his Old Bailey appearance attests, even ten years after those 1919 riots Fernando considered it necessary to carry a pistol for self-defence.

Fernando's battle for official recognition as an Aboriginal British Australian began in earnest during the early twentieth century, no doubt reflecting the end of his life as a trader and the beginning of his sojourn in various European cities. Since his departure, Aboriginal rights had diminished, not improved, in Australia. Although Aboriginal men had been granted the vote in various colonial states, NSW among them, prior to federation, from 1901 the Federal Constitution excluded Aborigines from citizenship as 'aliens' in the new nation³⁸ Official recognition of his Aboriginal identity had become an urgent matter when war broke out, and Fernando was interned in Austria, alongside other English-speaking nationals, including North Americans (and presumably some British Africans and African-Americans). Where his fellow prisoners were able to access prison relief through their respective embassies, Fernando was without means of support. The only known documents in Fernando's own hand, the 1916 applications he made for prison relief, afford insight into his transnational project for rights.

Fernando addressed British authorities through the American consul in Vienna (there was no British representative in the city). He represented himself as a British subject of Australia forced to leave his country due to the hostile conditions native people faced there. Advising that he had appealed, unsuccessfully, for recognition of his identity since 1910, Fernando recognised the irony in his present position. He argued cogently that a further rejection while he was held as a British prisoner of war should surely lead to his release! Calling for 'fair play', he pointed out that internment had cost him his job, his health and his property, 'which is too much for any working man'. (Owning property, whether land or house, was denied Aboriginal people living under increasing government control in twentieth-century Australia, and has figured historically as the subject of one of the most persistent of Aboriginal

activist campaigns.⁴⁰) In both of his 1916 letters, Fernando identified himself as A. M. Fernando (indicating that he had already made one visit to Italy where he had assumed his new name), an 'Honest Hardworking Black Man'.

Given the importance to him of his mother's people and given his silence about his father, why did not he describe himself as an Aborigine, let alone a Dharuk? One possible answer lies in the fact that such categories were the invention of colonists intent on identifying, manipulating or even inventing power groups to their own advantage. Another lies in the fact that by identifying with the wider black world Fernando aimed to occupy an identity beyond the reach of racial science and to re-articulate blackness as a resistant category. After all, Fernando had been one of the 'blacks' many thought should be exterminated if they did not die out quickly of their own accord.⁴¹ By turning 'black' into a proper noun, as Fernando did in his second letter, he asserted his place in this community at the same time as extending its scope to include Aboriginal people. Viewed comparatively, the oppression of the Aborigines had much in common with the African experience of slavery.⁴² Furthermore, by calling himself a hardworking black man, Fernando countered contemporary racist stereotypes of black men as lazy and dishonest.⁴³

Official responses to his case, however, persistently described him as 'a negro who claims to have been born in Australia and who is interned as a British subject'.⁴⁴ (Was this because US officials visited him in prison and assumed his blackness to indicate his African origin? At the risk of re-inscribing their interpretation, it may be that their assumption offers some confirmation that Fernando's father was not a white man.) After making inquiries in NSW concerning this 'Fernando', the Australian Prime Minister's Department advised the US embassy in Vienna that 'his birth has not been registered' and that 'no information' was available concerning his origins. They concluded that he was 'a negro, at present interned in Austria' who was not an Australian and thus could not claim to be a British subject.

Australian recognition of his indigeneity soon followed however. During his time in prison, Fernando befriended a London barrister, Mr Cranshaw, and when they were both deported to London following the war he became the man's servant. Soon afterwards, however, he rejected his new employer's offer of a stipend for life, and returned to independent travel in which he renewed his protests. Having removed himself from the reach of the NSW Government by leaving Australia years earlier, Fernando now confronted a larger adversary: Australian federal authorities overseas. He would increasingly target them as he struggled for recognition of his Aboriginal identity, and for wider public awareness of the conditions faced by Aboriginal people living under their control in Australia. His criticisms of policy on Aborigines became of enormous concern to the federal authorities in London. If Anglo-Australian women promoting Aboriginal rights from London in the 1930s angered them,⁴⁶ an Aboriginal man doing the same a few years earlier would surely have given reason for alarm. Would this bring more Aboriginal people to London to pour doubt on the civilised status of the emerging Australian nation? Australian authorities reacted to Fernando's protests by instigating an undercover report covering his activities in post-war Europe from 1919 to 1921.

According to their findings, while in Italy in 1919 Fernando had sought to petition the Pope, perhaps assuming that the Vatican, with its connections to missions and native peoples, would be sympathetic to his cause. But as its 1924 World Missionary Exhibition would confirm, Vatican interest was limited to the ethnography of objects from heathen cultures since brought under missionary control.⁴⁷ In Geneva he contacted members of the newly formed League of Nations, an institution that accepted personal petitions from displaced persons; indigenous rights under settler colonialism were, however, largely beyond its scope.⁴⁸ While in Berne, he wrote for the German—Swiss newspaper *Der Bunde*, a socialist daily with strong internationalist leanings, expressing both his claims of injustice towards the Aborigines and his views on the post-war world. The undercover report noted: 'In one of his [*Der Bunde*] articles, he considers it "a special injustice that Germany's colonies should have been taken from her and placed partially under the control of Australia".' Astounded by his activist career, the Australian investigators wondered at his capability to operate independently as a political agitator, suspecting that Fernando had been employed by the Germans with the aim of attacking Australia and Britain's credibility as colonists. Australia had only recently gained the newly

mandated territory of New Guinea as part of the war reparations paid by Germany to the League of Nations and, as a British nation, was concerned to align itself with the postwar regime of humane colonisers endorsed by international agreement. Drawing on, admittedly, hearsay evidence, they concluded that 'Fernando seems to be actuated less by a concern for the natives than by a desire to do England harm ... the man appears not only anti-British but pro-German, and it is suggested that he is employed by the Germans'.⁵⁰ Believing, incorrectly, that Fernando was from South Australia, they made inquiries there concerning the early life of this worrying 'Australian native'. No evidence of him could be found.⁵¹

Back in Italy in 1921, Fernando spent part of his day walking the streets wearing a placard and handing out pamphlets accusing whites of murdering Aborigines in Australia, participating in a vibrant urban culture comprising sandwich-board men, pamphleteers, hawkers and performers vying for the attention of passing crowds, and making Aboriginal rights part of contemporary European street culture. The fascist Government imprisoned him for disseminating anti-British propaganda (Britain and Italy were allies); he was held without trial for several months before being deported to England.

Making his way to London, Fernando joined other soap-box orators in Hyde Park propounding political and social change,⁵³ among them Pan-Africanists who had held their first protest meeting there in 1919.⁵⁴ Fernando's ready identification with the transnational black community they proposed can be surmised. Among Caribbeans and West Africans living in Europe and London, Harold Moody, later of the League of Coloured Peoples, was a leader among a first generation of black activists proposing an international Pan-Africanist community, with Pan-African congresses linking British, North American and European black people in a post-slavery, post-imperialist movement.⁵⁵ Fernando must have felt the irony of his situation as he spoke alongside such Pan-Africanists in a gathering-place whose colonial namesake (Hyde Park in Sydney) he had known first as a boy so long ago and so many thousands of miles away.

Published scenes of London's famous Toy Market, well established by the early 1900s, show toy-hawkers wearing placards advertising their wares. Fernando seems to have adapted this combination when he began picketing the most high-profile of his targets thus far, Australia House, the London home of Australia's government representatives. Along with his placard and pamphlets, he pinned to his suit toy skeletons he had made, telling passers-by that they stood for murdered Aborigines.⁵⁷ While some members of the public were perhaps aware that he was referring to recent violence against Aboriginal people in Australia, and others were possibly sympathetic more generally to humanitarian campaigns for native peoples living within the British Empire, the Australian authorities were all too clear about his intentions. They reacted by having Fernando arrested repeatedly for loitering and disturbing the peace, but to no avail. As their confidential report of 1921 inadvertently confirms, Fernando continued to be a thorn in their sides. While the Australian authorities in the early 1920s were suspicious of Fernando's motives and hostile to his perspective, those who met him during his trial, eight years later, were in no doubt of the veracity of his claims.

As the interest of the English and Australian press in Fernando's case illustrated, where better for an Aboriginal man to criticise Australia than from London? Now, when he was in his mid-sixties, Fernando's testimony finally found its Australian public. Drawing on a report in *The Times* of the previous day, on 2 February 1929 the *Sydney Morning Herald* reported under the headline 'Aborigines' Story. In London Court. Persecution of Blacks':

Anthony Martin Fernando, 65, an aboriginal toy hawker, born near Sydney, was remanded for a month at the Old Bailey to ascertain what could be done for him.

Sir Ernest Wild, after hearing the evidence of barristers about the man's good character, declined to imprison him on a charge of presenting a revolver at Philip Limber with intent to do bodily harm. It was alleged that Fernando, who pleaded guilty to the assault, threatened Limber, who taunted him about being black...

Addressing the Court in fluent English, he said: 'I have been boycotted everywhere. Look at my rags. I cannot make ends meet. All I hear is "Go away, black man". It is all tommy rot to say that we are savages. Whites have shot, slowly starved, and hanged us. I have pleaded the aborigines' cause since 1887'.

Sir Ernest Wild said that it was very provoking of anyone to call attention to Fernando's colour. He asked two barristers who had satisfactorily employed the man to arrange to assist him

In his defence, Fernando benefited from the long-standing imperial trope of the civilised black man. He offered a stinging critique of white race politics, yet was successful in appealing to the court's sense of its own elevated sensibilities on racial matters. Accordingly, the Court Recorder Ernest Wild found against a prison sentence for this man of 'good character' who could speak fluent English and who had impressed with his controlled passion.

Concerned nonetheless that Fernando's crime showed a potential for violence, Wild called for a psychological test. According to the quite specific recollection of one contemporary, far from asserting that Fernando had lost his reason, the psychologist's report effectively endorsed his account of colonisation in NSW, commending his strength of mind, given the treatment of his people. His capacity to recognise support where it was offered confirmed that the source of his anger lay in the behaviour of others: 'If this man is given consideration he responds with gratitude. He holds strong views about the manner in which his people are treated — a sign, not of insanity, but of an unusually strong mind. There is no occasion to commit him to an asylum!' Discovering that he was to be held on remand for six weeks, Fernando protested loudly to the court that custody was just another attempt to keep him from promoting the Aboriginal cause. In response,

The Recorder said that nobody objected to the defendant expressing strong views concerning the treatment of Australian aborigines. He had been kept in custody because he carried and threatened to use a revolver. A man differently coloured might have been imprisoned. 'Whatever you think of whites', he said to Fernando, 'there is justice in Britain.

This idea that justice in Britain might override injustices in the colonies was important to indigenous politics around the time of Fernando's trial. In 1926, an entourage of Maori had travelled from New Zealand to England to petition King George V.⁶² Only a few years later, Australian Aboriginal activist William Ferguson, president of the Australian Aborigines' League, collected thousands of signatures for an Aboriginal rights' petition addressed to the King of England.⁶³ But Fernando's experience in Australia had shown that British law could not be depended on to protect indigenous rights, especially where it conflicted with those of whites. He had been turned away from giving evidence in the 1880s precisely because he was an Aboriginal man whose evidence could bring white men to British justice. Nor had such occurrences diminished with the passing of time. The murder of Aborigines, particularly by parties of colonists and police claiming to be engaged in the capture of suspects, and the failure of local judges to find against white murderers of Aboriginal people, had been headline news in Australia and abroad only two years before Fernando's appearance in court.⁶⁴ Not surprisingly, Fernando did not appeal for British justice in his own case or for that of his people

(although he did have confidence in his right to speak on both matters in a British court of law in London).

Several days after Fernando's first appearance in court, the secretary of the Anti-Slavery and Aborigines' Protection Society (ASAPS) noted that the humanitarian author and educator Mary Montgomery Bennett, who was living in London at this time and was well-known to the ASAPS, had become interested in Fernando's trial. Several recent studies of Bennett's commitment to Aboriginal rights have noted her increasing inclination to join with (rather than speaking for) Aboriginal people in their rights' struggles, and it seems likely that Fernando was important in this process.⁶⁵ Bennett's interest in the benevolent guardianship of the Aborigines had been expressed in her first book, *Christison of Lammermoor*; but, within a few years, her second book, *The Australian Aborigine as a Human Being*,

became one of the most important defences of Aboriginal self-determination written prior to the Second World War. She met Fernando in 1929, a year before she completed her second book, and he appears in its pages.

Bennett had telephoned the ASAPS to say that 'she wanted to get hold of an Australian aboriginal [sic] who was brought up at the Old Bailey and would like, if possible, to bring him before [their Aborigines Sub-]Committee as a live specimen'.⁶⁶ As I have said, specimen status had marked the appearance of Aborigines in Europe in the nineteenth century. Although her description of Fernando was undoubtedly an ironic comment on the lack of Aboriginal people known by the sub-committee, it also suggests the continuing assumption that Aborigines were passive subjects. Bennett would in following years cast aside this attitude in her insistence on the agency of the Aboriginal people, one of her greatest legacies.

At first Fernando refused to appear before their 'so-called philanthropic organisation' (was this Fernando's term?).⁶⁷ Bennett was not one to be defeated. Several days later she went to his cell, neatly circumventing his refusal to meet with her, but also reasserting her imperial power as a white woman. The tension between these two impulses, her desire to learn from Fernando and her wish to appropriate him into her own telling of the Aboriginal problem, is evident in her accounts of their meeting. In a letter to another of her regular correspondents interested in the Aboriginal question in Australia, she described their exchange in glowing terms:

I have met Fernando who is small and delicate and with a gentle gravity of demeanour which only girding and insult can rouse him from. He spoke most beautifully to his employer's old mother who had come to see him. He said to her what a proud thing it was for her to have brought up such a son, and he spoke so gratefully and affectionately of Mr Crawshaw. 'A good father is good, but a good mother is above every other good. I was taken from my mother when I was little, but the thought of her has been the guiding star of my life! This is what he said to her. And to me, 'If you want to help my people, you must be quick, for there are not many left.'

For Bennett, Fernando was no longer a specimen, but an individual whose personal and political commitments informed her own. In *The Australian Aboriginal* she wrote of Fernando both as a 'typical' Aborigine but also as a tragic hero whose people were under immediate threat, fitting his life story into a European tradition of hope against the odds:

[He] is a typical Aboriginal, with a childlike desire to trust people, but experience has broken his confidence, and he has become a strange mixture of trustfulness and suspicion, of faithful affection to those who treat him decently and inextinguishable fury of indignation at the wrongs of his race ... He works for his living while following his mission, and might live at ease in good service. But voices of his people call to him not to forget their sufferings and wrongs, and he starts on new travels. Age cannot dim the faith that burns in his fragile, worn-out body. If he would tell the tale of these wanderings, wider than those of Ulysses or St Paul, what a history that would be of a pilgrim following not even a memory but only an imagination about his mother for his guiding star!

Bennett's meeting with Fernando seems to have been pivotal in her return to Australia, marking a new intensity in her work for the Aboriginal cause. In the decades which followed, through her involvement with Aborigines living on missions and with Aboriginal activists, she represented individuals in their claims against authorities, as well as speaking out nationally and internationally for Aboriginal rights. In many ways her life of protest in Australia was to become as driven and isolated as Fernando's own.⁷⁰ One element in this commitment was land, and Bennett became involved in the Model Aboriginal State Movement, calling for large self-managed reserves, a campaign never accepted by state or federal governments as a viable response to the Aboriginal question.⁷¹

Land was central, too, to Fernando's politics. In their 1921 undercover report, the Australian authorities had noted that Fernando would 'advocate the creation of "Reserves" or "Refuge-Territory" for the black race in Australia similar

to those allotted to Indians by the Government in the U.S.A.', a provision made necessary by 'England's brutal treatment of the Australian blacks'.⁷² Perhaps Fernando had spoken to Bennett about these ideas and helped to form her views; but if he had, she wasn't telling, preferring to emphasise his heroic suffering over his political pragmatism. Given his own expert mobilisation of this tragic narrative, Fernando perhaps would not have minded. In 1936, Bennett expressed her disgust at whites to the ASAPS in terms Fernando might have appreciated:

We have a long way to go before human conditions will be obtained by this highly gifted race. The facts are at present that they are being willed to death. The majority of Australians are still poisoned with a strong anti-native bias — the criminal cannot forgive the victim he has wronged ... But that I believe in God, I should despair, not of the Aborigines who respond magnificently, but of the white people ... Nobody could be more cruel, greedy, dishonourable and unjust in their dealings with native races than the British Australian ⁷³

Several weeks later London's Morning Post reported Fernando's second appearance in court following his arraignment:

Anthony Martin Fernando, aged 65, who claimed to be an Australian aborigine, was placed on probation for two years ... [From the witness box] Fernando made a heated outburst against the white race.

Mr. F. M. Crawshaw, a barrister, yesterday told the Recorder that he formerly employed Fernando in his house and was willing to take him back. In answer to the Recorder, who asked if he was willing to return, Fernando said, 'If everyone was like Mr. Crawshaw I should not be here.' Whereupon the Recorder remarked, 'We should have reached the millenium.'⁷⁴

Following his trial, the ASAPS reported that Fernando, then working as a cook for Crawshaw, did 'not wish to see anybody'.⁷⁵ We have no information concerning the next ten years of Fernando's life. At some point he left Crawshaw, once again preferring his independence to a life in service, no matter that it was kindly offered. Independence was again to prove dangerous for an Aboriginal man living in London. In January 1938, as Australia celebrated 150 years of white settlement, Fernando appeared for the last time in a London court. The Sydney Morning Herald reported: 'Aboriginal in Trouble. White "Brutality" Denounced.' Then in his seventies, Fernando's arraignment mirrored his first, ten years earlier. Charged with assaulting a fellow-lodger for his racial taunts, Fernando used the opportunity to again speak out against racism:

The magistrate asked what he could do to help him Fernando declared that nobody could help him, and added that his knowledge of the white man's treatment of the blacks, especially the Australian aborigines gave him no hope of justice.

The magistrate: 'You are a self-educated man?'

Fernando: 'Yes, I had a bitter education in white brutality ...'.

The case against him was dismissed. Fernando died in 1949 in a home for elderly men in Essex, England.

Fernando's claims about white brutality could not have been more pertinent than in the sesquicentennial year of 1938. As part of the celebrations, a re-enactment of the 'discovery' of Australia was performed in Sydney Cove, close to Woolloomooloo, and involved Aborigines cast as figures acquiescing to colonisation. Aboriginal activists from around Australia staged a Day of Mourning in protest.⁷⁸ Leading among them was Pearl Gibbs. According to the historian Heather Goodall, Gibbs collected newspaper reports of Fernando's court appearances, and filed them among her most treasured personal papers.⁸⁰ The long-term impact on Aboriginal politics in Australia of Fernando's outspoken protest can only be imagined. Gibbs went on to campaign against the alienation of Aborigines under the constitution, a campaign that proved successful through referendum in 1967. As a result of their inclusion in the nation and, by the 1970s, of the granting of Australian citizenship, an increasingly radical era of Aboriginal activism

commenced, one focused on international courts and First Nations' networks rather than Britain. Individual protest on English soil returned unexpectedly to the spotlight, however, in the bicentennial year of 1988. In an unknowing homage to Fernando, Aboriginal activist Burnum Burnum stood on the cliffs of Dover and claimed England for the Aboriginal people. Contrasting Aboriginal rule with British justice, he promised Aboriginal colonisers would uphold the rights of their subjects.



Edited by Jerome Kagan and Sharon Lamb

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Blurb:

How—and when—do children distinguish right from wrong? Several prominent psychologists and a moral philosopher join in these essays to confront this issue and related questions and to clarify the controversies surrounding them. Introducing cross-cultural and cross-disciplinary viewpoints, the resulting volume is a landmark in the study of moral development. Based on papers given at a MacArthur Foundation conference held at Harvard University in 1985, the essays focus on several major controversies: Is morality innate or learned? How do standards for moral judgment develop as children grow older? Are there universal standards that all children acquire? Do gender and cultural differences have any bearing on moral development? What is the relation between philosophical analyses of morality and the empirical data being gathered by social scientists? In discussing these questions and working toward answers, the contributors draw on findings from recent research in anthropology, philosophy, and developmental psychology. They consider how morality may be affected by economic factors, parental behavior, cultural conventions, objective standards for behavior, emotional development, and gender. By taking into account each other's arguments, the contributors have made the volume a coherent, integrated introduction to a diversity of approaches. The volume editors provide an insightful introduction that opens up not only the issues raised by the contributors but also possibilities for future research in child development.

In this chapter I am concerned with the earliest stages of children's understanding of the "standards" of their social world and the feelings of those who share that world. These two features of social cognition

are crucial to the development of moral *understanding*, regardless of which theoretical approach to moral *judgment* is favored. In order to trace the beginnings of moral understanding, we must describe the child's growing grasp of social rules and of the consequences of his or her actions for other people's feelings or needs. My focus is on the second year of life—a period in which children make astonishingly rapid advances in this understanding.

Our studies of children observed at home show that adult standards become highly salient during the second year. They become a source of curiosity, distress, delight, and shared humor. Changes in children's emotional behavior and in the behavior of others in the children's world parallel the changes in children's understanding of rules and feelings, and I will argue that any attempt to understand the development of moral understanding must take serious account of both these changes. It is also important to examine the changes in children's behavior in the context of family relationships, taking full account of the emotional nature of those relationships. It is in the context of these social relationships that the dramatic advances in social understanding are made.

Evidence for changes in children's understanding will be drawn from observations of three social contexts—incidents of conflict within the family, pretend play between siblings, and discussion of feelings and rules between mothers and children. The interactions in these social situations suggest that affective experience may play an important part in these earliest stages of moral understanding. They also illuminate the relative influences of peers and adults, and of didactic, disciplinary, or role-taking experiences on the development of children's grasp of social norms.

Understanding Standards and Emotions

What do we know about the earliest stages of children's interest in and understanding of family social rules and relationships? It could be argued on commonsense grounds that just as it is adaptive for children to be able to understand the emotions and intentions of family members, so too the ability to recognize features of the relationships between family members and of the social rules of the family is of major importance. The recent work on the abilities of nonhuman primates to recognize aspects of the relationships between other members of their social group supports this idea. Nonhuman primates behave differently toward others within their group not only on the basis of kinship and dominance but also on the previous history of alliances and prior support (Cheyney and Seyfarth 1982; Cheyney, Seyfarth and Smuts 1986). For very young children, however, our information on these issues remains sketchy. We know from mothers' reports in the studies of Zahn-Waxler and her colleagues (Zahn-Waxler, Radke-Yarrow, and King 1979) that during the second year most children become sensitive to the distress and anger of other family members. But other information on children's behavior within the family is lacking. Studies by Emde, Campos, and their colleagues (Campos and Stenberg 1981; Klinnert *et al.* 1983) show that by the end of the first year children monitor their mothers' emotional expressions in a situation of uncertainty and modify their behavior accordingly. But while such studies have provided illuminating demonstrations of children's capabilities, we remain ignorant of when and how children use such capabilities in their family lives.

Kagan's (1981) studies of the second year highlight a different

feature of the developmental changes in children's understanding.

The children in his studies showed an increasing interest in objects that were broken, flawed, or dirty and thus failed to conform to expected standards. Toward the end of the second year they also showed a distress at their own failure to achieve the goals set by adults in an

experimental setting. Kagan argued convincingly that the common thread linking both classes of developmental change is an increasing understanding of and concern with the standards of adults.

Studies of children in group settings show that by three and four years old, children respond differently to different kinds of rule breaking or transgression (Much and Shweder 1978; Nucci and Nucci 1982; Nucci and Turiel 1978; Turiel 1983). Although the data do not show unambiguously a clear distinction between transgressions of social convention and of moral standards, they demonstrate that three-year-olds are sensitive to different kinds of cultural breach. It should be noted that the context of this research—the school setting—is one in which a rather special set of "social convention" rules is dominant. While three- and four-year-old children may be sensitive to the particular nature of "institutional" rules, we do not know how sensitive they may be to different kinds of family transgressions and rules. How sensitive are children to moral breaches in the family? And when does their interest in family rules develop? Because it is within the family that an understanding of cultural rules first develops, studies of moral understanding should include observations of behavior within this family context. Disputes between family members over breaches of rules and conflicts of interest provide a context in which children's understanding is illuminated, and—it seems highly probable—also formed.

Family Conflict

The focus of our two studies was on the interaction of secondborn children with their older siblings and mothers. Unstructured naturalistic observations were carried out in the home repeatedly during the second year. The methodology and results of the studies are described in detail elsewhere (Dunn and Munn 1985). The methodology was designed to include details of the conflict incidents, the verbal communication between family members concerning the incident, and the affective behavior of the participants. Family conversations during the observations were recorded on a portable tape recorder and transcribed by the observer following the observation. The observational record included not only precoded categories for the behavior of child, sibling, and mother during conflict but also narrative details of the incidents and a record of the expression of intense negative or positive affect by the participants.

Incidents of dispute and confrontation were frequent in these families as table 2.1 shows.

While there was not a significant increase in the frequency of such incidents over the course of the second year, there were striking developments in the children's behavior during the incidents and in the behavior of other family members toward the children. Three aspects of these changes stand out as particularly interesting in relation to the development of moral understanding. These are, first, changes in children's behavior related to the anticipation and understanding of others' feelings and intentions; second, changes related to understanding of and communication about social rules; third, changes in

children's emotional behavior.

Let us consider first how behavior in sibling conflicts changed.

The children's anticipation of others' feelings was revealed in two developments during the second year. The first was the development of teasing behavior. The children showed, with increasing frequency and with increasingly elaborate behavior, a pragmatic understanding of how to provoke and annoy the sibling during confrontation. At fourteen, sixteen, and eighteen months, most instances of such teasing involved the child removing the older sibling's comfort object or favorite possession, or attempting to destroy the sibling's valued possession or game. Some instances involved teasing the older sibling with a frightening object. The following incident occurred during an observation of an eighteen-month-old:

(Example 1—Family H)

Mother to observer: "Anny [sibling] is really frightened of spiders. In fact there's a particular toy spider we've got that she just hates."

Child runs to next room, searches in toy box, finds toy spider, runs back to front room, pushes it at sibling—sibling cries.

Such instances became significantly more frequent during the second year; by eighteen months they were observed in seventeen of

forty children. The form of the teasing also changed; by twenty-four months verbal teasing was common and sometimes apparently reflected a surprisingly sophisticated grasp of what would irritate or upset the other child. One twenty-four-month-old, whose sister had three imaginary friends named Lily, Allelujah, and Peepee, would announce to her sister in situations of conflict that *she* was Allelujahan act that infuriated her sister.

A second development during the second year was a change in the children's appeals to the mother for help during conflict with the sibling. By sixteen to eighteen months there was a striking difference in the likelihood that a child would appeal to the mother for help following an act of physical aggression or teasing by the sibling, as opposed to following the child's own act of physical aggression or teasing. In one study, for instance, the children appealed to their mothers after only four of 125 aggressive or teasing acts they initiated themselves. In contrast they appealed to their mothers after sixty-five of ninety-nine such actions *the sibling* initiated. It appears that the children showed some anticipation that help from the mother would not be forthcoming when they themselves had acted in a physically aggressive or teasing way.

Communication' over sibling conflict changed in several ways during the second year. First, children began to refer explicitly to the responsibility of the sibling in the conflict incident:

(Example 2—Family N)

Child, twenty-one months: (Looks at mother, points at sibling),

Anny got my book.

(Example 3—Family N)

Child, twenty-four months: Child crying after sibling conflict, goes to mother.

Mother: What happened?

Child: Anny bumped me.

There were also significant increases in the frequency with which both siblings and mothers, in addressing the children, referred to social rules and the feelings of others in the course of conflict incidents. These references suggest that the expectations of both siblings and mothers concerning the children's understanding of such

rules and feelings were changing. In addition, there were interesting links between the mothers' comments to the *siblings* concerning rules and feelings and the children's behavior both at the time and six months later. For instance, in those families in which the mother referred frequently to social rules and feelings in talking to the sibling, the child was more likely to appeal to the mother during sibling con

flict six months later. This finding suggests children may attend to and reflect on conversations about transgressions addressed to others, especially when such comments are made in the highly emotive context of disputes between family members.

Parallel to the developments in teasing and communicative behavior, there were striking changes in emotional behavior. During the second year children became more aggressive. When the younger sibling was fourteen months old, hitting and physical violence were most likely to be shown by the older sibling. But by eighteen months the secondborns were equally likely to be the first to escalate a dispute from verbal to physical aggression. Around eighteen months, they became increasingly agitated, angry, or distressed by conflict interactions. Self-abuse, tantrums, redirected aggression to the mother, and destruction of toys were increasingly common.

The same developmental changes also stand out when the children's behaviors in conflicts with their mothers are examined. There was an increased frequency of teasing the mother, of looking at the mother and laughing while carrying out a previously forbidden act, and of drawing the mother's attention to a forbidden act by pointing to the results of the act and vocalizing. These events highlight the child's developing capacity to anticipate the feelings or reactions of others. Deliberate evasion was also observed. One child went behind the sofa to pick her nose after being forbidden to do so, another hid when she wanted to pull the stitches in a cut on her forehead, and a third who had taken a pot of brandy butter out of the refrigerator carried it behind the sofa to eat it.

After sixteen months "conversations" between mother and child over transgressions were recorded in every family studied. The mothers' comments were often in question form, as if they expected and provided space for an answer. As early as sixteen months, children took part in such conversations about rules by shaking their heads, nodding, or giving verbal answers. A striking feature of these conversations was that the children explicitly commented on their own responsibility for transgressions.

(Example 4—Family Ch)

Child, twenty-one months: Child spills drink on floor, looks at mother.

Mother: Oh dear, oh dear!

Child: Look.

Mother: Look! Yes!

Child: Rubbing at spilt drink with hand. Rub it in. Rub it in.

(Looks at observer.) I done it. I done it.

(Example 5—Family Ho)

Ella, twenty-one months: At table, throws toy to floor (previously forbidden). Looks at mother.

Mother: No! What's Ella?

Child: Bad bad baba.

Mother: A bad bad baba.

Children also joined in conversations between mother and sibling to comment on the transgressions of others.

(Example 6—Family H)

Child, twenty-four months: Sibling shows mother that she has drawn on a piece of jigsaw puzzle.

Sibling, to mother: Look.

Mother, to sibling: You're not supposed to draw on them, Caroline.

You should know better. You only draw on pieces of paper.

You don't draw on puzzles.

Child, to mother: Why?

Mother, to child: Because they aren't pieces of paper.

Child: Naughty.

Mother: Yes that is a naughty thing to do.

The teasing nature of the children's behavior in many of these exchanges was clear.

(Example 7—Family C)

Child, eighteen months: Child pulls mother's hair hard.

Mother: Don't you pull my hair! Madam! Don't pull hair. No it's not nice to pull hair is it?

Child: Hair.

Mother: Hair yes, but you mustn't pull it must you?

Child: Yes! (smiles)

Mother: No! No!

Child: No!

Mother: No. No. It's not kind to pull hair is it?

Child: Nice!

Mother: No it isn't.

Child: Nice!

Changes in the children's emotional behavior was particularly clear during the incidents of dispute with the mother. Physical aggression to the mother, destruction of objects, self-injury, and fullblown tantrums all increased significantly during the second year (see Goodenough 1931, for similar findings).

The data indicate that during the second year children begin to understand how to upset and tease other family members and show an increasing interest in what is permitted or prohibited behavior. These developments in understanding were apparent in conflicts and transgressions in which the children themselves were not initially involved.

Disputes and arguments between mother and older sibling were rarely ignored by the secondborn children; however, their response to such disputes varied. Sometimes the eighteen- or twentyfour-month-olds responded to the conflict by imitating the forbidden act: sometimes they joined by prohibiting the sibling; sometimes they acted in a supportive way to mother or sibling, carrying out an action that *helped* either one or the other. "Collusion and conspiracy have begun" was the comment of one mother, describing the way that her two children now joined forces against her.

These incidents offer us the opportunity to examine whether differences in the children's behavior depend on the nature of the dispute—that is, whether the secondborns were responding to the emotion expressed by the participants and whether the topic of the conflict affected their behavior. The emotion expressed by mother or sibling was indeed linked to the nature of the children's response (see table 2.2).

If the mother or sibling expressed intense anger or distress during a dispute, the secondborns were most likely to watch or support

the sibling, and the participants were rarely laughed at. By contrast, if the sibling laughed during a dispute with the mother, the secondborn child usually responded to the incident by laughter or imitation. Incidents in which neither mother nor sibling expressed emotion were most frequently ignored, watched, or imitated.

It seems, then, that the children were sensitive to the emotions expressed by sibling or mother, and that their responses not only differed with the emotions that were expressed but were "appropriate."

Children showed support to distressed or angry siblings but very rarely to laughing siblings. It is possible of course that the children were responding to some other feature of the conflict which was itself associated with the display of emotion. One possibility we examined was that the *topic* of the conflict was systematically related to differences in the children's response. We distinguished three categories of topic, those focused on "rules," those concerned with "power," and those focused on "aggression."

The investigation showed that children laughed at "rules" incidents more than at "power" incidents: they laughed at and imitated the sibling more in "rules" incidents than in "aggression" incidents: and they prohibited the sibling more in "aggression" incidents than in the "rules" or "power" incidents (see table 2.3). However, these topic categories were not independent of the emotion expressed by the participants. Intense negative emotion was more likely to be expressed in "aggression" incidents, while laughter by the sibling was more common in "rules" incidents than in "aggression" or "power" disputes.

Clearly we cannot assume either that the children were responding solely to the topic of conflict or solely to the emotion expressed by the participants. It is of course important to note that the topic and the emotion expressed were closely related. But to examine the children's sensitivity to the topic of the conflict per se we need to consider their response to those incidents in which neither mother nor sibling expressed either positive or negative emotion. The results of this analysis showed that even when no extreme emotions were expressed, children did respond differently according to the topic of the conflict. They ignored more of the conflicts focused on "power" disputes than on "rules." Transgressions of the rules of the family, which involved breaches of rules of possession, rudeness, or wild boisterous behavior, were more salient to the children than "power" disputes between mother and sibling. In their verbal comments on the conflicts between mother and sibling, the children showed some awareness of their sibling's transgression. And in their supportive and comforting actions they demonstrated a practical understanding of the emotional state of the other and of how to alleviate this distress. What inferences can we make from these observations about the child's understanding of social rules within the family? The children's behavior in conflict, or when others are carrying out transgressions, their attention-getting and evasive behavior, and their explicit comments all indicate that the children are developing some conception that rules are shared by family members. They show indisputable interest in what is expected and permitted, and what is forbidden.

The Role of Others

What role do family members play in the development of social and

moral understanding? The close meshing of adult reference to acceptable standards with the increasing interest of their children in such matters was evident not only in conflict situations (with reference to the rules) but also in another context—the discussion of broken or flawed objects. Kagan (1981) drew attention to children's concern with objects that were flawed, first observed at nineteen months in an experimental setting. In our home observations we found a steadily increasing interest in such objects that was, however, already evident at fourteen months (see figure 2.1). Note that the mothers drew their children's attention to such objects from the beginning of the second year and their communications about these flawed objects increased in frequency, as did those of the children. It is a strong possibility that

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The Significance of Emotions

Emotional behavior shown during transgressions changed markedly during the second year. The parallel between the increase in the violence of emotions expressed and the developments in social understanding was striking. Tantrums, self-abuse, destruction of objects, and physical aggression increased over the same period in which the social understanding reflected in the development of teasing, evasion, and collusion grew so dramatically. Others have argued that the increasing frustration and anger expressed by children during the second year is closely linked to the child's developing sense of self (Kagan 1981). In particular, Kagan (1984) has stressed the significance of emotional experiences in the development of moral understanding

acquisition

of standards—for a "principled morality." He emphasizes children's increasing worry and concern at failure to achieve adult-approved standards, their empathy with others' distress, and their distress at their own inability to master tasks. This emphasis on affect and on the close link between self-awareness and appreciation of standards is illuminating and important. But the results of our studies suggest two caveats.

The salience of the issue of adult standards and transgressions is unquestionable: the curiosity and interest children demonstrate is vividly clear. But in highlighting the links between emotion and the acquisition of standards we should not fail to recognize the "intellectual" and frequently rather *unemotional* interest children show in, for instance, broken, dirty, or flawed objects. At least some of the discussion of social rules is unemotional, explorative, and characterized by reflection rather than emotional drama.

Previous discussions of emotion and moral development have focused on the distress, anxiety, shame, or fear aroused by transgression or the failure to achieve adult-approved standards. These are seen as crucial for the development of social understanding; indeed, a functional argument is put forward in which these "negative" emotions are central in preventing the child from being a destructive force (Kagan 1984). But this stress on "negative" emotions should not obscure the other emotions children express in relation to standards and to their violation—namely their amusement and pleasure. Children show delight in sharing understanding that standards have been violated. They make *jokes* about rule violations and share them with others. Some of the looks and smiles given in such incidents may be

generated by uncertainty or worry about the adult's reaction, but hardly all. If we are in the game of offering functional interpretations, there is an equally plausible argument that an important function of emotions, both positive and negative, is to heighten the child's awareness of others, of the feelings, the relationships, the rules and roles of the family world.

What is so important about focusing on the role of emotion in the acquisition of standards is that it forces us to think about a more general issue—the relation between emotion and cognitive changes. The conventional way to think about this relation is to see changes in emotional behavior as a reflection of changes in cognitive ability. But it is surely a more complex relation. The emotional experiences may well play some part in the growth of the children's understanding. It could be, for instance, that the emotion generated in relation to transgression of adult standards *heightens* the child's cognitive aware

ness—for instance, *because* he is so upset about *X* he thinks harder about it.

As Maccoby and Martin (1983) have pointed out, the work on state-dependent memory (Bower 1980) suggests that experiences are tagged with affective labels and that these labels have a great deal to do with the way in which past experience is brought to bear on current functioning. A good example of this is the finding of Zahn-Waxler and her colleagues. The importance of maternal communication about *not hurting others* lay not in the explanations that mothers gave for the others' distress or the consequences but in the affective intensity that accompanied it. The amount of sympathetic arousal and helpful action over others' distress that children showed at a later time was correlated with the emotional intensity of the mothers' communication. It seems particularly likely that affective experiences are significant in the development of moral understanding and particularly important that researchers be sensitive to this possibility.

Pretend Play

Conflict is not the *only* context—or even necessarily the most important context—in which children begin to grasp the rules of the culture in which they grow up. Two other aspects of children's social life stand out as potentially interesting. The first of these is the context of joint pretend play. The significance of pretend play as a context in which children explore and exploit social rules and roles has been beautifully demonstrated in work with three- and four-year-olds by Garvey (1977) and by Martlew and her colleagues (Martlew, Connolly, and McCleod 1978). However, the beginnings of this ability to take part in social role play, which involves sharing a pretend framework with another person and taking on a role other than the self, have been little studied. We have examined the development of children's social role play in two studies (Dunn and Dale 1984), focusing on naturally occurring sequences of children's play at home, with mother, sibling, and alone.

During the second year, about a third of the children in each of these studies began to engage in joint role play with their siblings, play in which social rules and social roles were discussed, varied, and enacted. The play was a source of pleasure and amusement in which both children shared an understanding of their social world. Four features of this play deserve note.

The joint play between sibling and two-year-old took place predominantly

in those families in which the relationship between the

siblings was a warm and affectionate one. It was uncommon in those families in which the siblings did not get along well. A second point is that although the general framework for this social pretend play was almost always set by the older sibling, the younger children did make innovative contributions to the play. They did not simply follow the directions of their siblings but offered suggestions, negotiated rules and roles, and contributed to the shared world of play. This is strikingly sophisticated behavior for such young children. Until now such capabilities have been thought to be well beyond the powers of twenty-four-month-olds. The play shows one way in which an affectionate relationship with a sibling can provide experiences which may be of real developmental significance. The third point is that as early as eighteen months children who had an affectionate and supportive sibling were initiated into such play and began to demonstrate some powers of understanding that social roles and practices can be a source of play and humor and can be varied and even distorted. Finally, the studies showed that children of this age only engaged in such play with a sibling, never with their mothers. Mothers engaged in pretend play as spectators rather than as partners with their two-year-olds.

The general point of importance concerns the processes leading to the development of moral understanding. It appears that different relationships within a family have *different* potential for the growth of understanding of the standards, roles, and rules of the social world in which the children grow up. To put it another way, different aspects of children's developing understanding of social rules are likely to be fostered in different relationships—a point to which I will return.

Conversations about Inner States and Feelings

Children learn about the rules of their culture not only in conflict interactions and pretend play but also in communication between family members about feelings and inner states. It has been argued that the experience of empathic feelings is important in the development of moral understanding (Hoffman 1976). It has also been shown, as we noted earlier, that parental explanations to children of the cause of other people's distress, especially explanations with a strong affective component, are particularly effective in promoting altruistic behavior. A plausible case can be made for the potential influence of family conversations about feeling states on the development of empathetic behavior, and thus moral understanding. But when and why do such family conversations arise with very young children? Are there

empirical grounds for considering them to be developmentally important? Analysis of the conversations between mothers and their children during the second year shows that feelings and inner states are discussed quite frequently by mothers and their young children (Dunn, Bretherton, and Munn 1987), and it is common for such discussions to focus on the feelings of people *other* than the child. Moreover, the mother's explanations of the cause of feeling states are often made in settings that are emotionally loaded. One context is that of maternal prohibition and punishment of the child; another is that of another person expressing distress. The explicit references by the two-year-olds to inner states, in contrast, are frequently made in a pretend play setting. The themes most often explored are tiredness, pain, pleasure, sadness, or distress. The frequency of such references in pretend play demonstrates not only an interest in feeling states but

a competence in enacting a feeling state other than their own current state.

Children, then, take part in conversations about others' feeling states in the second year; they play with and show interest in the cause of such feeling states; and their mothers discuss the causes in contexts that are far from effectively neutral. There are, moreover, striking individual differences between mothers in the frequency of such conversations about feeling states, and it appears likely that such differences are linked over time with differences in children's behavior. Four examples will illustrate the grounds for making such a claim.

First, in our initial sibling study we found that differences in the frequency with which mothers referred to the new siblings' feelings and wants were linked to differences in the affectionate, friendly and social behavior of both children fourteen months later (Dunn and Kendrick 1982). Second, differences in maternal comments to the older child about the second child's feelings during sibling conflict were linked to differences in the second child's appeals to the mother in subsequent sibling conflict six months later (Dunn and Munn 1985). Third, there was a significant positive correlation between the frequency of maternal references to inner states when the child was eighteen months old and the frequency with which the children made explicit reference to feeling states at twenty-four months ($r(42) = .62$) (Dunn, Bretherton, and Munn 1987). And fourth, in families in which the mother frequently referred to the feelings of the firstborn when intervening in sibling conflict, the secondborn was likely to show the relatively advanced behaviors of conciliation, reference to rules, and teasing at twenty-four months (Dunn and Munn 1986b).

Differences between families in the frequency of conversations about feeling states do appear to be related to differences in the children's behavior over time. We have no evidence, as yet, for links between such differences in discussion of feelings and differences in moral understanding later in development. However, one set of findings from the conversational analysis is particularly intriguing in relation to the development of moral understanding and judgment.

Gender differences are evident in the frequency of conversations about feelings. On every measure in our current study, girls score more highly than boys. They are talked to more often about feeling states as eighteen-month-olds and as twenty-four-month-olds by both their mothers and their older siblings, and by twenty-four months they themselves talk more about feelings. Initiation of conversations about feelings by the mothers and discussion of causes of feelings are more common in families with girls than with boys. With the recent evidence for differences between women and men in the nature of their moral judgments (Gilligan, 1982)—with a far greater emphasis laid by women on the feelings of individuals—these gender differences in early conversations about feelings take on new importance.

Social Understanding in the Second and Third Years: Implications for Theories of the Development of Moral Understanding

Affect

Family life is highly emotional. But the ways in which affective experiences relate to developmental changes in the social understanding

of very young children are far from clear. Some of the different theoretical possibilities are explored in Kagan's (1984) recent book, and two further caveats to his argument, raised by our observations, have already been outlined. In this concluding section five general points concerning the relation of affect and moral understanding will be summarized.

1. In the context of frustration over newfound independence, and conflict and rivalry with parents and siblings, the emotional experiences of the child are both frequent and intense. The anger and distress that the children express when their wishes are refused or when their sibling "wins" in a dispute demonstrate how important it is for the children to anticipate and understand the behavior of others in such situations, to grasp how other family members are likely to behave in order to make sure that their wishes are not frustrated. Both Sigmund and Anna Freud have emphasized that the sibling relation

ship is, because of the intensity of emotions involved, central to the development of moral understanding (see for instance Freud and Dann 1951).

2. Although empathetic responses to others do become more frequent in the second and third years there is also an increase in diametrically different behaviors: actions that reflect a practical grasp of how to upset others. Not only does this sophisticated behavior depend on understanding the feelings and wishes of the sibling; it also suggests that the intense emotional experiences of rivalry within the sibling relationship may well lead to the learning or development of *immoral* behavior. Behavior that is specifically intended to hurt or upset others takes place at least as early as *moral* behavior. And the pleasure and interest that children show in breaking rules echo this point. The development and elaboration of unkind acts and transgression of rules is well worth our study. A focus on empathetic behavior alone would be unnecessarily narrow. If it is the development of moral understanding rather than moral judgment that we are attempting to describe, then the "immoral" behavior of teasing and the behavior of children when they carry out breaches of family rules should not be ignored. Such behaviors show us clearly that the children understand both how to hurt other people's feelings and also that such behavior is not acceptable to family members.

Others have argued that empathetic experiences do provide a motive for altruism and the development of morality; this approach, however, focuses on a relatively limited set of moral situations (Rest 1983). In fact some of the triadic interactions we have described here, in which a child witnesses a dispute between mother and sibling or a transgression by the sibling, present the child with interesting conflicts of interest and emotion—the dilemma of whom to support or help in situations in which helping one antagonist will annoy the other.

3. The emotional quality of particular relationships may well influence the route by which children grow to moral understanding. The link between a close sibling relationship and the role-taking skills apparent in joint pretend play highlights this point, an issue discussed more fully below.

4. The data make clear that by twenty-four months children's verbal comments show some grasp of the notion of responsibility and blame in relation to feelings and to social rules.

5. Finally, it is clear that many children grow up—at least in the

United Kingdom—in a family world in which mothers continually articulate and discuss social and moral rules and others' feelings. Children are beginning to reflect on and articulate these issues as they

reach twenty-four months. Individual differences in mothers' discussion of feelings and rules even when addressing *others* in the family may be of some developmental importance.

Peers and Adults

What are the implications of these findings for the theoretical arguments on the relative roles of peers and adults in fostering moral understanding? It appears that different family relationships may have relevance for different aspects of social and moral understanding. It is important to delineate these differences in the developmental implications of interaction with parents and with siblings and not to emphasize the importance of either one at the expense of the other. The correlational analyses from the observations suggest that the experience of a rivalrous sibling relationship is associated with the development of certain kinds of understanding: how to annoy and upset another person and how to enlist the aid of a parent against the sibling. The correlations indicate that the experience of a close and affectionate sibling relationship, in contrast, is linked to the early development of the ability to take part in role play, to conciliate and to cooperate with another (Dunn and Munn 1986a and 1986b). And the evidence from three of our studies and from that of Zahn-Waxler and Yarrow indicates that the experience of growing up with a mother who explains and is concerned about others' feelings is associated with the development of conciliatory behavior, altruistic behavior, and the ability to discuss feeling states as early as two years. What is striking is that even within the second and third years children are sensitive to the pragmatic implications of these differences. It is not only that children understand social standards but also that they understand the part that standards play in particular relationships. They tease mothers about politeness and about affection: "I don't love you Mummy," two of our twenty-four-month-olds said in triumph to their mothers. They tease siblings about possession, taking turns, and imaginary friends. Consider the following findings from our observations of these families when the children were three years old, with two questions in mind: Who initiates discussion of breaches of rules? Who draws attention to which kinds of breach? Figure 2.2 shows that three-year-old children are frequently responsible for initiating discussion of breaches. However, they initiate discussion of different kinds of breach with different family members. In parallel, these different family members themselves are concerned to draw the children's attention to different categories of breach.

In the context of the mother-child relationship, politeness, destruction, and dirt are salient issues. In the context of the siblingchild relationship possession is discussed. By thirty-six months children are sensitive to these differences. It would surely therefore be a mistake to emphasize *either* the mother *or* the sibling as exclusively important in the development of children's understanding of cultural rules. The kinds of dichotomies that are put forward in theoretical

discussions—for instance Piaget's dichotomy of the morality of constraint, experienced through interaction with an adult, and the morality of cooperation, experienced through interaction with peers—appear to be misleading. Our observations show that discussion and argument about what is allowed or forbidden—the morality of constraint—take place both with the sibling and with the mother. And the morality of cooperation can be experienced either with mother, with sibling, or with both.

Nevertheless the individual differences in the quality of these relationships with a parent or a sibling may well be important. In families in which the child is close to the sibling the child is likely to be involved in rather different exchanges over rules than the child

who has no sibling or has an intense relationship with the mother and a relatively cool relationship with the sibling. How important such differences may be over time is an unexplored but intriguing question that deserves our attention. We need to examine the possible connections between the beginnings of social understanding and the quality of the relationships within the family in which the child grows up, a strategy taken in the research described in Dunn (1987).

The recent review of research on moral development in Mussen's *Handbook of Child Psychology* (Rest 1983) concludes that "People generally change in the direction of making moral judgments on the basis of a better understanding of social relationships and social arrangements."

The observations described in this chapter are of course concerned with moral understanding rather than moral judgment.

But the point is equally apposite. I would argue further that it may well be in part *because* of the emotional urgency and significance of these relationships that children begin to attend to, explore, and exploit moral understanding. They are far from being able to make judgments about hypothetical moral dilemmas, but they are very close to being able to assign responsibility for family transgressions, to make choices about whom to support in family disagreements, and to use this understanding as a source of power and pleasure in their family relationships.

The Newborn Arrives With Many Behaviours Intact

7.2 Infancy and Childhood: Exploring and Learning

Extracted from: [INTRODUCTION TO PSYCHOLOGY – 1ST CANADIAN EDITION](#)

Chapter 7. Growing and Developing

7.2 Infancy and Childhood: Exploring and Learning

<https://opentextbc.ca/introductiontopsychology/chapter/6-2-infancy-and-childhood-exploring-and-learning/>

Learning Objectives

1. Describe the abilities that newborn infants possess and how they actively interact with their environments.
2. List the stages in Piaget's model of cognitive development and explain the concepts that are mastered in each stage.
3. Critique Piaget's theory of cognitive development and describe other theories that complement and expand on it.
4. Summarize the important processes of social development that occur in infancy and childhood.

If all has gone well, a baby is born sometime around the 38th week of pregnancy. The fetus is responsible, at least in part, for its own birth because chemicals released by the developing fetal brain trigger the muscles in the mother's uterus to start the rhythmic contractions of childbirth. The contractions are initially spaced at about 15-minute intervals but come more rapidly with time. When the contractions reach an interval of two to three minutes, the mother is requested to assist in the labour and help push the baby out.

The Newborn Arrives With Many Behaviours Intact

Newborns are already prepared to face the new world they are about to experience. As you can see in Table 7.2, "Survival Reflexes in Newborns," babies are equipped with a variety of reflexes, each providing an ability that will help them survive their first few months of life as they continue to learn new routines to help them survive in and manipulate their environments.

Table 7.2 Survival Reflexes in Newborns.

[\[Skip Table\]](#)

Name	Stimulus	Response	Significance	Video Example
Rooting reflex	The baby's cheek is stroked.	The baby turns its head toward the stroking, opens its mouth, and tries to suck.	Ensures the infant's feeding will be a reflexive habit	Watch "The Rooting Reflex" [YouTube]

Table 7.2 Survival Reflexes in Newborns.

[Skip Table]				
Name	Stimulus	Response	Significance	Video Example
Blink reflex	A light is flashed in the baby's eyes.	The baby closes both eyes.	Protects eyes from strong and potentially dangerous stimuli	Watch "Baby Blinking" [YouTube]
Withdrawal reflex	A soft pinprick is applied to the sole of the baby's foot.	The baby flexes the leg.	Keeps the exploring infant away from painful stimuli	Watch "Baby Withdraw Reflex" [YouTube]
Tonic neck reflex	The baby is laid down on its back.	The baby turns its head to one side and extends the arm on the same side.	Helps develop hand-eye coordination	Watch "Tonic Neck Reflex" [YouTube]
Grasp reflex	An object is pressed into the palm of the baby.	The baby grasps the object pressed and can even hold its own weight for a brief period.	Helps in exploratory learning	Watch "Grasp reflex" [YouTube]
Moro reflex	Loud noises or a sudden drop in height while holding the baby.	The baby extends arms and legs and quickly brings them in as if trying to grasp something.	Protects from falling; could have assisted infants in holding on to their mothers during rough travelling	Watch "Moro Reflex" [YouTube]
Stepping reflex	The baby is suspended with bare feet just above a surface and is moved forward.	Baby makes stepping motions as if trying to walk.	Helps encourage motor development	Watch "Stepping Reflex" [YouTube]

In addition to reflexes, newborns have preferences — they like sweet-tasting foods at first, while becoming more open to salty items by four months of age (Beauchamp, Cowart, Menellia, & Marsh, 1994; Blass & Smith, 1992). Newborns also prefer the smell of their mothers. An infant only six days old is significantly more likely to turn toward its own mother's breast pad than to the breast pad of another baby's mother (Porter, Makin, Davis, & Christensen, 1992), and a newborn also shows a preference for the face of its own mother (Bushnell, Sai, & Mullin, 1989).

Although infants are born ready to engage in some activities, they also contribute to their own development through their own behaviours. The child's knowledge and abilities increase as it babbles, talks, crawls, tastes, grasps, plays, and interacts with the objects in the environment (Gibson, Rosenzweig, & Porter, 1988; Gibson & Pick, 2000; Smith & Thelen, 2003). Parents may help in this process by providing a variety of activities and experiences for the child. Research has found that animals raised in environments with more novel objects and that engage in a variety of stimulating activities have more brain synapses and larger cerebral cortexes, and they perform better on a variety of learning tasks compared with animals raised in more impoverished environments (Juraska, Henderson, & Müller, 1984). Similar effects are likely occurring in children who have opportunities to play, explore, and interact with their environments (Soska, Adolph, & Johnson, 2010).

Research Focus: Using the Habituation Technique to Study What Infants Know

It may seem to you that babies have little ability to view, hear, understand, or remember the world around them. Indeed, the famous psychologist William James presumed that the newborn experiences a “blooming, buzzing confusion” (James, 1890, p. 462). And you may think that, even if babies do know more than James gave them credit for, it might not be possible to find out what they know. After all, infants can't talk or respond to questions, so how would we ever find out? But over the past two decades, developmental psychologists have created new ways to determine what babies know, and they have found that they know much more than you, or William James, might have expected.

One way that we can learn about the cognitive development of babies is by measuring their behaviour in response to the stimuli around them. For instance, some researchers have given babies the chance to control which shapes they get to see or which sounds they get to hear according to how hard they suck on a pacifier (Trehub & Rabinovitch, 1972). The sucking behaviour is used as a measure of the infants' interest in the stimuli — the sounds or images they suck hardest in response to are the ones we can assume they prefer.

Another approach to understanding cognitive development by observing the behaviour of infants is through the use of the habituation technique. **Habituation** refers to *the decreased responsiveness toward a stimulus after it has been presented numerous times in succession*. Organisms, including infants, tend to be more interested in things the first few times they experience them and become less interested in them with more frequent exposure. Developmental psychologists have used this general principle to help them understand what babies remember and understand.

In the **habituation procedure**,^[1] a baby is placed in a high chair and presented with visual stimuli while a video camera records the infant's eye and face movements. When the experiment begins, a stimulus (e.g., the face of an adult) appears in the baby's field of view, and the amount of time the baby looks at the face is recorded by the camera. Then the stimulus is removed for a few seconds before it appears again and the gaze is again measured. Over time, the baby starts to habituate to the face, such that each presentation elicits less gazing at the stimulus. Then a new stimulus (e.g., the face of a different adult or the same face looking in a different direction) is presented, and the researchers observe whether the gaze time significantly increases. You can see that if the infant's gaze time increases when a new stimulus is presented, this indicates that the baby can differentiate the two stimuli.

Although this procedure is very simple, it allows researchers to create variations that reveal a great deal about a newborn's cognitive ability. The trick is simply to change the stimulus in controlled ways to see if the baby “notices the difference.” Research using the habituation procedure has found that babies can notice changes in colours, sounds, and even principles of numbers and physics. For instance, in one experiment reported by Karen Wynn (1995), six-month-old babies were shown a presentation of a puppet that repeatedly jumped up and down either two or three times, resting for a couple of seconds between sequences (the length of time and the speed of the jumping were controlled). After the infants habituated to this display, the presentation was changed such that the puppet jumped a different number of times. As you can see in Figure 7.2, “Can Infants Do Math?” the infants' gaze time increased when Wynn changed the presentation, suggesting that the infants could tell the difference between the number of jumps.

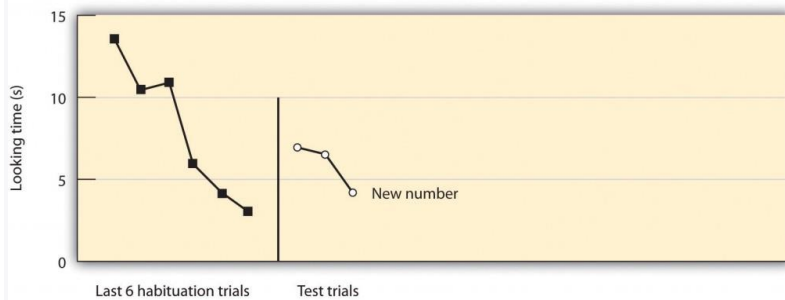


Figure 7.2 Can Infants Do Math? Karen Wynn found that babies that had habituated to a puppet jumping either two or three times significantly increased their gaze when the puppet began to jump a different number of times.

Cognitive Development During Childhood

Childhood is a time in which changes occur quickly. The child is growing physically, and cognitive abilities are also developing. During this time the child learns to actively manipulate and control the environment, and is first exposed to the requirements of society, particularly the need to control the bladder and bowels. According to Erik Erikson, the challenges that the child must attain in childhood relate to the development of *initiative*, *competence*, and *independence*. Children need to learn to explore the world, to become self-reliant, and to make their own way in the environment.



Figure 7.3 Portrait of Jean Piaget. Jean Piaget developed his theories of child development by observing the behaviours of children.

These skills do not come overnight. Neurological changes during childhood provide children the ability to do some things at certain ages, and yet make it impossible for them to do other things. This fact was made apparent through the groundbreaking work of the Swiss psychologist Jean Piaget (Figure 7.3). During the 1920s, Piaget was administering intelligence tests to children in an attempt to determine the kinds of logical thinking that children were capable of. In the process of testing them, Piaget became intrigued, not so much by the answers that the children got right, but more by the answers they got wrong. Piaget believed that the incorrect answers the children gave were not mere shots in the dark but rather represented specific ways of thinking unique to the children's developmental stage. Just as almost all babies learn to roll over before they learn to sit up by themselves, and learn to crawl before they learn to walk, Piaget believed that children gain their cognitive ability in a developmental order. These insights — that children at different ages think in fundamentally different ways — led to Piaget's *stage model of cognitive development*.

Piaget argued that children do not just passively learn but also actively try to make sense of their worlds. He argued that, as they learn and mature, children develop **schemas** — *patterns of knowledge in long-term memory* — that help them remember, organize, and respond to information. Furthermore, Piaget thought that when children experience new things, they attempt to reconcile the new knowledge with existing

schemas. Piaget believed that children use two distinct methods in doing so, methods that he called *assimilation* and *accommodation* (see Figure 7.4, “Assimilation and Accommodation”).

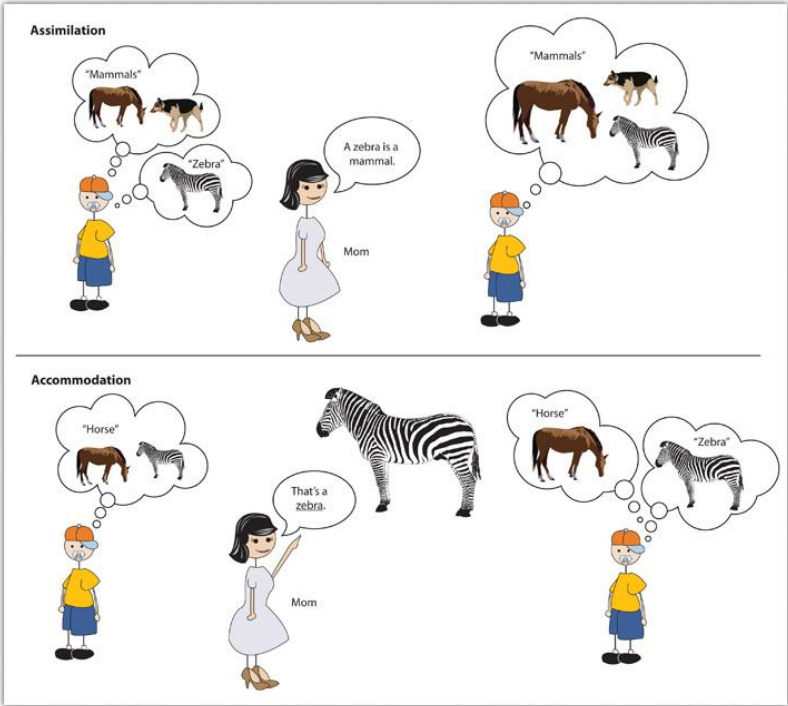


Figure 7.4 Assimilation and Accommodation.

When children employ **assimilation**, they *use already developed schemas to understand new information*. If children have learned a schema for horses, then they may call the striped animal they see at the zoo a horse rather than a zebra. In this case, children fit the existing schema to the new information and label the new information with the existing knowledge. **Accommodation**, on the other hand, involves *learning new information and thus changing the schema*. When a mother says, “No, honey, that’s a zebra, not a horse,” the child may adapt the schema to fit the new stimulus, learning that there are different types of four-legged animals, only one of which is a horse.

Piaget’s most important contribution to understanding cognitive development, and the fundamental aspect of his theory, was the idea that development occurs in unique and distinct stages, with each stage occurring at a specific time, in a sequential manner, and in a way that allows the child to think about the world using new capacities. Piaget’s stages of cognitive development are summarized in Table 7.3, “Piaget’s Stages of Cognitive Development.”

Table 7.3 Piaget’s Stages of Cognitive Development.

[Skip Table]			
Stage	Approximate age range	Characteristics	Stage attainments
Sensorimotor	Birth to about 2 years	The child experiences the world through the fundamental senses of seeing, hearing, touching, and tasting.	Object permanence

Table 7.3 Piaget's Stages of Cognitive Development.

[Skip Table]			
Stage	Approximate age range	Characteristics	Stage attainments
Preoperational	2 to 7 years	Children acquire the ability to internally represent the world through language and mental imagery. They also start to see the world from other people's perspectives.	Theory of mind; rapid increase in language ability
Concrete operational	7 to 11 years	Children become able to think logically. They can increasingly perform operations on objects that are only imagined.	Conservation
Formal operational	11 years to adulthood	Adolescents can think systematically, can reason about abstract concepts, and can understand ethics and scientific reasoning.	Abstract logic

The first developmental stage for Piaget was the **sensorimotor stage**, *the cognitive stage that begins at birth and lasts until around the age of two. It is defined by the direct physical interactions that babies have with the objects around them.* During this stage, babies form their first schemas by using their primary senses — they stare at, listen to, reach for, hold, shake, and taste the things in their environments.

During the sensorimotor stage, babies' use of their senses to perceive the world is so central to their understanding that whenever babies do not directly perceive objects, as far as they are concerned, the objects do not exist. Piaget found, for instance, that if he first interested babies in a toy and then covered the toy with a blanket, children who were younger than six months of age would act as if the toy had disappeared completely — they never tried to find it under the blanket but would nevertheless smile and reach for it when the blanket was removed. Piaget found that it was not until about eight months that the children realized that the object was merely covered and not gone. Piaget used the term **object permanence** to refer to *the child's ability to know that an object exists even when the object cannot be perceived.*

Children younger than about eight months of age do not understand object permanence.



[Watch: Object Permanence](#)

[\[YouTube\]](#): <http://www.youtube.com/v/nwXd7WyWNHY>

*At about two years of age, and until about seven years of age, children move into the **preoperational stage**. During this stage, children begin to use language and to think more abstractly about objects, with capacity to form mental images; however, their understanding is more intuitive and they lack much ability to deduce or reason.* The thinking is preoperational, meaning that the child lacks the ability to operate on or transform objects mentally. In one study that showed the extent of this inability, Judy DeLoache (1987) showed children a room within a small dollhouse. Inside the room, a small toy was visible behind a small couch. The researchers took the children to another lab room, which was an exact replica of the dollhouse room, but full-sized. When children who were 2.5 years old were asked to find the toy, they did not know where to look — they were simply unable to make the transition across the changes in room size. Three-year-old children, on the other hand, immediately looked for the toy behind the couch, demonstrating that they were improving their operational skills.

The inability of young children to view transitions also leads them to be **egocentric** — *unable to readily see and understand other people's viewpoints*. Developmental psychologists define the **theory of mind** as *the ability to take another person's viewpoint*, and the ability to do so increases rapidly during the preoperational stage. In one demonstration of the development of theory of mind, a researcher shows a child a video of another child (let's call her Anna) putting a ball in a red box. Then Anna leaves the room, and the video shows that while she is gone, a researcher moves the ball from the red box into a blue box. As the video continues, Anna comes back into the room. The child is then asked to point to the box where Anna will probably look to find her ball. Children who are younger than four years of age typically are unable to understand that Anna does not know that the ball has been moved, and they predict that she will look for it in the blue box. After four years of age, however, children have developed a theory of mind — they realize that different people can have different viewpoints and that (although she will be wrong) Anna will nevertheless think that the ball is still in the red box.

After about seven years of age until 11, the child moves into the **concrete operational stage**, which is *marked by more frequent and more accurate use of transitions, operations, and abstract concepts, including those of time, space, and numbers*. An important milestone during the concrete operational stage is the development of conservation — *the understanding that changes in the form of an object do not necessarily mean changes in the quantity of the object*. Children younger than seven years generally think that a glass of milk that is tall holds more milk than a glass of milk that is shorter and wider, and they continue to believe this even when they see the same milk poured back and forth between the glasses. It appears that these children focus only on one dimension (in this case, the height of the glass) and ignore the other dimension (width). However, when children reach the concrete operational stage, their abilities to understand such transformations make them aware that, although the milk looks different in the different glasses, the amount must be the same.

Children younger than about seven years of age do not understand the principles of conservation.



Watch: "Conservation"

[YouTube]: <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=YtLEWVu815o&feature=youtu.be>

At about 11 years of age, children enter the **formal operational stage**, which is *marked by the ability to think in abstract terms and to use scientific and philosophical lines of thought*. Children in the formal

operational stage are better able to systematically test alternative ideas to determine their influences on outcomes. For instance, rather than haphazardly changing different aspects of a situation that allows no clear conclusions to be drawn, they systematically make changes in one thing at a time and observe what difference that particular change makes. They learn to use deductive reasoning, such as “if this, then that,” and they become capable of imagining situations that “might be,” rather than just those that actually exist.

Piaget’s theories have made a substantial and lasting contribution to developmental psychology. His contributions include the idea that children are not merely passive receptacles of information but rather actively engage in acquiring new knowledge and making sense of the world around them. This general idea has generated many other theories of cognitive development, each designed to help us better understand the development of the child’s information-processing skills (Klahr & MacWhinney, 1998; Shrager & Siegler, 1998). Furthermore, the extensive research that Piaget’s theory has stimulated has generally supported his beliefs about the order in which cognition develops. Piaget’s work has also been applied in many domains — for instance, many teachers make use of Piaget’s stages to develop educational approaches aimed at the level children are developmentally prepared for (Driscoll, 1994; Levin, Siegler, & Druyan, 1990).

Over the years, Piagetian ideas have been refined. For instance, it is now believed that object permanence develops gradually, rather than more immediately, as a true stage model would predict, and that it can sometimes develop much earlier than Piaget expected. Renée Baillargeon and her colleagues (Baillargeon, 2004; Wang, Baillargeon, & Brueckner, 2004) placed babies in a habituation setup, having them watch as an object was placed behind a screen, entirely hidden from view. The researchers then arranged for the object to reappear from behind another screen in a different place. Babies who saw this pattern of events looked longer at the display than did babies who witnessed the same object physically being moved between the screens. These data suggest that the babies were aware that the object still existed even though it was hidden behind the screen, and thus that they were displaying object permanence as early as three months of age, rather than the eight months that Piaget predicted.

Another factor that might have surprised Piaget is the extent to which a child’s social surroundings influence learning. In some cases, children progress to new ways of thinking and retreat to old ones depending on the type of task they are performing, the circumstances they find themselves in, and the nature of the language used to instruct them (Courage & Howe, 2002). And children in different cultures show somewhat different patterns of cognitive development. Dasen (1972) found that children in non-Western cultures moved to the next developmental stage about a year later than did children from Western cultures, and that level of schooling also influenced cognitive development. In short, Piaget’s theory probably understated the contribution of environmental factors to social development.

More recent theories (Cole, 1996; Rogoff, 1990; Tomasello, 1999), based in large part on the **sociocultural theory** of the Russian scholar Lev Vygotsky (1962, 1978), argue that *cognitive development is not isolated entirely within the child but occurs at least in part through social interactions*. These scholars argue that children’s thinking develops through constant interactions with more competent others, including parents, peers, and teachers.

An extension of Vygotsky’s sociocultural theory is the idea of **community learning**, in which *children serve as both teachers and learners*. This approach is frequently used in classrooms to improve learning as well as to increase responsibility and respect for others. When children work cooperatively in groups to learn material, they can help and support each other’s learning as well as learn about each other as individuals, thereby reducing prejudice (Aronson, Blaney, Stephan, Sikes, & Snapp, 1978; Brown, 1997).

Social Development During Childhood

It is through the remarkable increases in cognitive ability that children learn to interact with and understand their environments. But these cognitive skills are only part of the changes that are occurring during childhood. Equally crucial is the development of the child's social skills — the ability to understand, predict, and create bonds with the other people in their environments.

Knowing the Self: The Development of the Self-Concept

One of the important milestones in a child's social development is learning about his or her own self-existence (Figure 7.5). This self-awareness is known as *consciousness*, and the content of consciousness is known as the *self-concept*. The **self-concept** is *a knowledge representation or schema that contains knowledge about us, including our beliefs about our personality traits, physical characteristics, abilities, values, goals, and roles, as well as the knowledge that we exist as individuals* (Kagan, 1991).

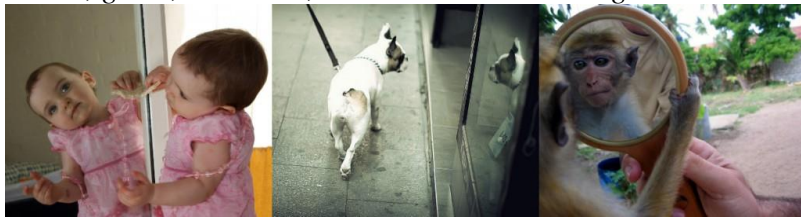


Figure 7.5 Recognizing Oneself in a Mirror. A simple test of self-awareness is the ability to recognize oneself in a mirror. Humans and chimpanzees can pass the test; dogs never do.

Some animals, including chimpanzees, orangutans, and perhaps dolphins, have at least a primitive sense of self (Boysen & Himes, 1999). In one study (Gallup, 1970), researchers painted a red dot on the foreheads of anesthetized chimpanzees and then placed each animal in a cage with a mirror. When the chimps woke up and looked in the mirror, they touched the dot on their faces, not the dot on the faces in the mirror. These actions suggest that the chimps understood that they were looking at themselves and not at other animals, and thus we can assume that they are able to realize that they exist as individuals. On the other hand, most other animals, including, for instance, dogs, cats, and monkeys, never realize that it is themselves in the mirror.

Infants who have a similar red dot painted on their foreheads recognize themselves in a mirror in the same way that the chimps do, and they do this by about 18 months of age (Povinelli, Landau, & Perilloux, 1996). The child's knowledge about the self continues to develop as the child grows. By age two, the infant becomes aware of his or her sex, as a boy or a girl. By age four, self-descriptions are likely to be based on physical features, such as hair colour and possessions, and by about age six, the child is able to understand basic emotions and the concepts of traits, being able to make statements such as "I am a nice person" (Harter, 1998).

Soon after children enter school (at about age five or six), they begin to *make comparisons with other children, a process known as social comparison*. For example, a child might describe himself as being faster than one boy but slower than another (Moretti & Higgins, 1990). According to Erikson, the important component of this process is the development of **competence** and **autonomy** — *the recognition of one's own abilities relative to other children*. And children increasingly show awareness of social situations — they understand that other people are looking at and judging them the same way that they are looking at and judging others (Doherty, 2009).

Successfully Relating to Others: Attachment

One of the most important behaviours a child must learn is how to be accepted by others — the development of close and meaningful social relationships. *The emotional bonds that we develop with those with whom we feel closest, and particularly the bonds that an infant develops with the mother or primary caregiver, are referred to as **attachment*** (Cassidy & Shaver, 1999). See examples in Figure 7.6.



Figure 7.6 Children's Attachment to Caregivers. Children develop appropriate attachment styles through their interactions with caregivers.

As late as the 1930s, psychologists believed that children who were raised in institutions such as orphanages, and who received good physical care and proper nourishment, would develop normally, even if they had little interaction with their caretakers. But studies by the developmental psychologist John Bowlby (1953) and others showed that these children did not develop normally — they were usually sickly, emotionally slow, and generally unmotivated. These observations helped make it clear that normal infant development requires successful attachment with a caretaker.

In one classic study showing the importance of attachment, Wisconsin University psychologists Harry and Margaret Harlow investigated the responses of young monkeys, separated from their biological mothers, to two surrogate mothers introduced to their cages. One — the wire mother — consisted of a round wooden head, a mesh of cold metal wires, and a bottle of milk from which the baby monkey could drink. The second mother was a foam-rubber form wrapped in a heated terry-cloth blanket. The Harlows found that although the infant monkeys went to the wire mother for food, they overwhelmingly preferred and spent significantly more time with the warm terry-cloth mother that provided no food but did provide comfort (Harlow, 1958).

The studies by the Harlows showed that young monkeys preferred the warm mother that provided a secure base to the cold mother that provided food.



[Watch: "The Harlows's Monkeys" \[YouTube\]:](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=MmbbfisRiWA)

[http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=MmbbfisRiWA](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=MmbbfisRiWA)

The Harlows's studies confirmed that babies have social as well as physical needs. Both monkeys and human babies need a **secure base** that *allows them to feel safe*. From this base, they can gain the confidence they need to venture out and explore their worlds. Erikson (Table 7.1, "Challenges of Development as Proposed by Erik Erikson") was in agreement on the importance of a secure base, arguing that the most important goal of infancy was the development of a basic sense of trust in one's caregivers.

Developmental psychologist Mary Ainsworth, a student of John Bowlby, was interested in studying the development of attachment in infants. Ainsworth created a laboratory test that measured an infant's attachment to his or her parent. The test is called the **strange situation** — *a measure of attachment in young children in which the child's behaviours are assessed in a situation in which the caregiver and a stranger move in and out of the environment* — because it is conducted in a context that is unfamiliar to the child and

therefore likely to heighten the child's need for his or her parent (Ainsworth, Blehar, Waters, & Wall, 1978). During the procedure, which lasts about 20 minutes, the parent and the infant are first left alone, while the infant explores the room full of toys. Then a strange adult enters the room and talks for a minute to the parent, after which the parent leaves the room. The stranger stays with the infant for a few minutes, and then the parent again enters and the stranger leaves the room. During the entire session, a video camera records the child's behaviours, which are later coded by trained coders.



In the strange situation, children are observed responding to the comings and goings of parents and unfamiliar adults in their environments.

Watch: “The Strange Situation” [YouTube]: <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=QTsewNrHUHU>

On the basis of their behaviours, the children are categorized into one of four groups, where each group reflects a different kind of attachment relationship with the caregiver. A child with a **secure attachment style** usually *explores freely while the mother is present and engages with the stranger*. The child may be upset when the mother departs but is also happy to see the mother return. A child with an **ambivalent** (sometimes called *insecure-resistant*) **attachment style** is *wary about the situation in general, particularly the stranger, and stays close or even clings to the mother rather than exploring the toys*. When the mother leaves, the child is extremely distressed and is ambivalent when she returns. The child may rush to the mother but then fail to cling to her when she picks up the child. A child with an **avoidant** (sometimes called *insecure-avoidant*) **attachment style** will *avoid or ignore the mother, showing little emotion when the mother departs or returns*. The child may run away from the mother when she approaches. The child will not explore very much, regardless of who is there, and the stranger will not be treated much differently from the mother.

Finally, a child with a **disorganized attachment style** seems to have *no consistent way of coping with the stress of the strange situation* — the child may cry during the separation but avoid the mother when she returns, or the child may approach the mother but then freeze or fall to the floor. Although some cultural differences in attachment styles have been found (Rothbaum, Weisz, Pott, Miyake, & Morelli, 2000), research has also found that the proportion of children who fall into each of the attachment categories is relatively constant across cultures (see Figure 7.7, “Proportion of Children With Different Attachment Styles”).

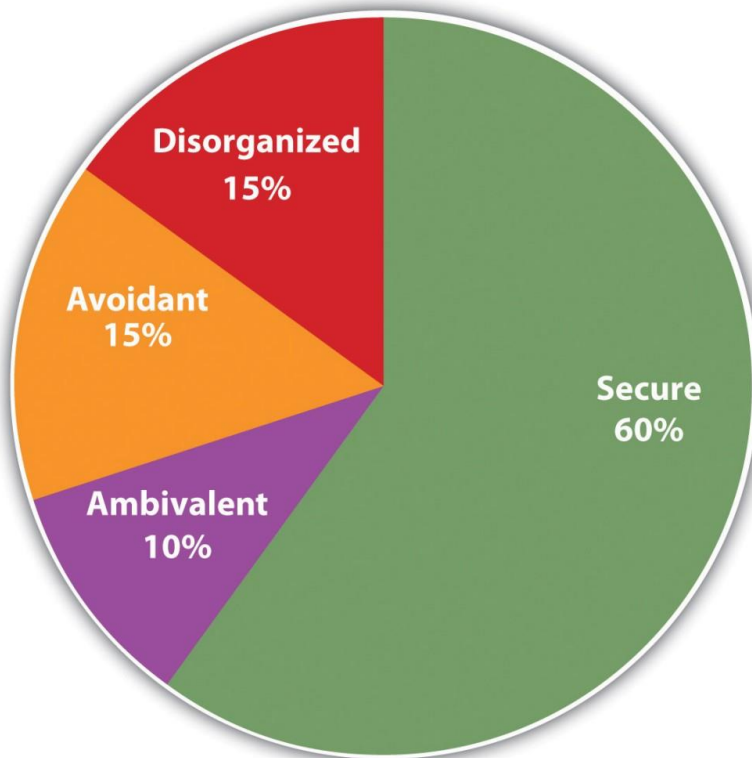


Figure 7.7 Proportion of Children With Different Attachment Styles. The graph shows the approximate proportion of children who have each of the four attachment styles. These proportions are fairly constant across cultures. [\[Long Description\]](#)

You might wonder whether differences in attachment style are determined more by the child (nature) or more by the parents (nurture). Most developmental psychologists believe that socialization is primary, arguing that a child becomes securely attached when the mother is available and able to meet the needs of the child in a responsive and appropriate manner, but that the insecure styles occur when the mother is insensitive and responds inconsistently to the child's needs. In a direct test of this idea, Dutch researcher Dymphna van den Boom (1994) randomly assigned some babies' mothers to a training session in which they learned to better respond to their children's needs. The research found that these mothers' babies were more likely to show a secure attachment style compared with the babies of the mothers in a control group that did not receive training.

But the attachment behaviour of the child is also likely influenced, at least in part, by **temperament**, *the innate personality characteristics of the infant*. Some children are warm, friendly, and responsive, whereas others tend to be more irritable, less manageable, and difficult to console. These differences may also play a role in attachment (Gillath, Shaver, Baek, & Chun, 2008; Seifer, Schiller, Sameroff, Resnick, & Riordan, 1996). Taken together, it seems safe to say that attachment, like most other developmental processes, is affected by an interplay of genetic and socialization influences.

Research Focus: Using a Longitudinal Research Design to Assess the Stability of Attachment

You might wonder whether the attachment style displayed by infants has much influence later in life. In fact, research has found that the attachment styles of children predict their emotions and their behaviours many years later (Cassidy & Shaver, 1999). Psychologists have studied the persistence of attachment styles over time using **longitudinal research designs** — *research designs in which individuals in the sample are followed and contacted over an extended period of time, often over multiple developmental stages*.

In one such study, Waters, Merrick, Treboux, Crowell, and Albersheim (2000) examined the extent of stability and change in attachment patterns from infancy to early adulthood. In their research, 60 middle-class infants who had been

tested in the strange situation at one year of age were recontacted 20 years later and interviewed using a measure of adult attachment. Waters and colleagues found that 72% of the participants received the same secure versus insecure attachment classification in early adulthood as they had received as infants. The adults who changed categorization (usually from secure to insecure) were primarily those who had experienced traumatic events, such as the death or divorce of parents, severe illnesses (contracted by the parents or the children themselves), or physical or sexual abuse by a family member.

In addition to finding that people generally display the same attachment style over time, longitudinal studies have also found that the attachment classification received in infancy (as assessed using the strange situation or other measures) predicts many childhood and adult behaviours. Securely attached infants have closer, more harmonious relationships with peers, are less anxious and aggressive, and are better able to understand others' emotions than are those who were categorized as insecure as infants (Lucas-Thompson & Clarke-Stewart, 2007). And securely attached adolescents also have more positive peer and romantic relationships than their less securely attached counterparts (Carlson, Sroufe, & Egeland, 2004).

Conducting longitudinal research is a very difficult task, but one that has substantial rewards. When the sample is large enough and the time frame long enough, the potential findings of such a study can provide rich and important information about how people change over time and the causes of those changes. The drawbacks of longitudinal studies include the cost and the difficulty of finding a large sample that can be tracked accurately over time, and the time (many years) that it takes to get the data. In addition, because the results are delayed over an extended period, the research questions posed at the beginning of the study may become less relevant over time as the research continues.

Cross-sectional research designs represent an alternative to longitudinal designs. In a **cross-sectional research design**, *age comparisons are made between samples of different people at different ages at one time*. In one example, Jang, Livesley, and Vernon (1996) studied two groups of identical and nonidentical (fraternal) twins, one group in their 20s and the other group in their 50s, to determine the influence of genetics on personality. They found that genetics played a more significant role in the older group of twins, suggesting that genetics became more significant for personality in later adulthood.

Cross-sectional studies have a major advantage in that the scientist does not have to wait for years to pass to get results. On the other hand, the interpretation of the results in a cross-sectional study is not as clear as those from a longitudinal study, in which the same individuals are studied over time. Most important, the interpretations drawn from cross-sectional studies may be confounded by *cohort effects*. **Cohort effects** refer to *the possibility that differences in cognition or behaviour at two points in time may be caused by differences that are unrelated to the changes in age. The differences might instead be due to environmental factors that affect an entire age group*. For instance, in the study by Jang, Livesley, and Vernon (1996) that compared younger and older twins, cohort effects might be a problem. The two groups of adults necessarily grew up in different time periods, and they may have been differentially influenced by societal experiences, such as economic hardship, the presence of wars, or the introduction of new technology. As a result, it is difficult in cross-sectional studies such as this one to determine whether the differences between the groups (e.g., in terms of the relative roles of environment and genetics) are due to age or to other factors.

Key Takeaways

- Babies are born with a variety of skills and abilities that contribute to their survival, and they also actively learn by engaging with their environments.
- The habituation technique is used to demonstrate the newborn's ability to remember and learn from experience.
- Children use both assimilation and accommodation to develop functioning schemas of the world.
- Piaget's theory of cognitive development proposes that children develop in a specific series of sequential stages: sensorimotor, preoperational, concrete operational, and formal operational.
- Piaget's theories have had a major impact, but they have also been critiqued and expanded.
- Social development requires the development of a secure base from which children feel free to explore. Attachment styles refer to the security of this base and more generally to the type of relationship that people, and especially children, develop with those who are important to them.

- Longitudinal and cross-sectional studies are each used to test hypotheses about development, and each approach has advantages and disadvantages.

Exercises and Critical Thinking

1. Give an example of a situation in which you or someone else might show cognitive assimilation and cognitive accommodation. In what cases do you think each process is most likely to occur?
2. Consider some examples of how Piaget's and Vygotsky's theories of cognitive development might be used by teachers who are teaching young children.
3. Consider the attachment styles of some of your friends in terms of their relationships with their parents and other friends. Do you think their style is secure?

Children's emotion regulation in unfair situations Using regulatory focus theory

Elizabeth Mary Yan

Abstract

Children's strategies for emotion regulation in different unfair situations were investigated using principles from Regulatory Focus Theory (RFT) (Higgins, Shah, & Friedman, 1997). RFT explains how our orientations (promotion or prevention) towards self-regulatory goals can affect our selection of different strategies used for self-regulation (approach or avoidance). The thesis contains three studies that investigated children's emotional responses to different unfair situations and their strategies for regulating emotion. The four goal outcomes: no gains, gains, losses and no losses, formed the different unfair situations in this research. Novel vignettes describing different unfair situations were used in two interview studies, conducted with 162 children aged between 8 and 12 years. The vignettes elicited different intensities of happiness between the outcomes. Losses were judged most unfair, with expected happiness also lowest in this condition. By contrast, unfair gains were perceived fairer, with happiness highest in this condition. In the main vignette study, more approach strategies were reported than avoidance strategies overall and no differences were found between the outcomes. Seeking teacher support was the most frequently reported strategy for prevention-oriented outcomes (losses and no losses). Strategies for prolonging or maintaining positive emotion were frequently reported in the gain situation, and seeking another opportunity was frequently reported in the no gain situation. In a third experimental study involving an actual behavioural task, 52 children participated in a computer game that unfairly delivered erroneous scores. Under these conditions the children reported no gains were most unfair and happiness was lowest. Unlike the vignette studies, differences in avoidance and approach strategies were observed, with approach strategies more frequently reported in the gain, no loss and loss outcomes, and avoidance strategies were more frequently reported in the no gain outcome. Despite the limitations associated with using a novel approach, the overall findings suggested children were more inclined to report approach strategies for regulation; however, some children have a preference for avoidance strategies in unfair situations. RFT was a useful framework for explaining children's emotion regulation in unfair situations. The findings of this research have implications on emotion regulation development in children, particularly for children who use avoidance strategies to cope with unfair events.

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Intersectionality Reflections from the Gender & Development Network

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Taking an intersectional approach means being mindful of three main points:

While all women are subject to gender discrimination in one way or another, it is not just gender but also race, socio-economic class and other factors which shape their experiences of discrimination, marginalisation and oppression.

An individual's particular experience of intersecting discriminations is unique; it is not simply the sum of different discriminations. ... **an experience that is more than the sum of its parts.**

The problems experienced by a person who is blind and deaf, are greater than the problems suffered by a blind person, plus the problems experienced by a deaf person. For this reason, it is usually easy to underestimate the total impact of multiple disabilities.

To appropriately support people with multiple disabilities, it is essential to carefully consider the separate disabilities and to also consider and include in the analysis, intersectional impacts.

As a political movement, feminism must tackle all forms of discrimination and oppression whether based on gender, race or class.

An intersectional approach is intellectually demanding and requires a greater depth and breadth of analytical commitment over time than most agencies are used to, made all the more difficult in the context of contracting space and funding for gender work.

Fissures in the women's movement, although already present, could become more apparent as potential conflict of interest and power are exposed – requiring honesty and self-exploration to protect and strengthen the collective power that the women's movement as a whole has built.

Tackling the structures of oppression: Thinking about and working in development with an intersectional lens means understanding that particular experiences of oppression come from many structures, processes and institutions interacting at once—and that resisting that oppression is also a multifaceted project that must be central to the work. According to AWID, intersectionality is thus not just a theory and methodology but also “a springboard for a social justice action agenda.”¹² Feminism as a political movement must embrace the idea that: “Just as there are no human rights without women's rights, there are no human rights without indigenous peoples' rights, the rights of the disabled, of people of colour, and of gays and lesbians, just to name a few.”

[Gender equality for women and girls with disabilities - 'the 3 Ps'](#)

An intersectional approach to discrimination Addressing multiple grounds in human rights claims

Ontario Human Rights Commission

<https://www.ohrc.on.ca/en/intersectional-approach-discrimination-addressing-multiple-grounds-human-rights-claims/introduction-intersectional-approach>

An introduction to the intersectional approach

A human rights complaint or an equality rights case that cites multiple grounds of discrimination can be approached in one of several different ways. Depending on the approach that is selected, the analysis of the claim will differ and it is likely that the outcome will also be affected.

In most instances, an intersectional approach to a multiple grounds complaint is the preferred one. The concept of ‘intersectionality’ has been defined as “intersectional oppression [that] arises out of the combination of various oppressions which, together, produce something unique and distinct from any one form of discrimination standing alone....”^[6] An intersectional approach takes into account the historical, social and political context and recognizes the unique experience of the individual based on the intersection of all relevant grounds.^[7] This approach allows the particular experience of discrimination, based on the confluence of grounds involved, to be acknowledged and remedied.

Several examples help to illustrate the unique experience of discrimination based on historical, political and social contexts and the intersection of grounds:

- In many cases, racial minority women experience discrimination in a completely different way than racial minority men or even women as a gender. Similarly, racial minority men may experience discrimination that would not be faced by non-minority males or even women of the same background. This is because groups often experience distinctive forms of stereotyping or barriers based on a combination of race and gender. An intersectional approach recognizes this.
- A person who belongs to a particular religion may face religious discrimination only if they identify by another ground such as race, colour or ethnic origin or may experience discrimination differently from co-religionists based on the relationship with another ground. Gender can also be a factor that has an impact on religious discrimination.
- Women may be more likely to experience sexual harassment if they are more vulnerable by virtue of another aspect of their experience such as recent arrival in Canada.
- Persons with disabilities may experience particular barriers when they identify by other grounds. For example, during the Commission’s consultations on age discrimination, the Commission was told that for persons with disabilities, aging can result in a disproportionate impact or unique experiences of discrimination. Indeed, statistical evidence confirms the particular disadvantages faced by older persons with disabilities.^[8] Similarly, research indicates that persons with disabilities and persons who are members of racialized groups are more likely to be unemployed or under-employed.^[9] Therefore, members of racialized groups who have disabilities may be doubly disadvantaged. Aboriginal persons with disabilities face the same problems as

other persons with disabilities but these are worsened by jurisdictional issues, namely the lack of disability-related services on reserves and the jurisdictional barriers to accessing services for those who live off reserves.^[10] Evidence also indicates that women with disabilities experience additional disadvantage as a result of the intersection of disability with gender.^[11]

- Discrimination on the basis of sexual orientation may be experienced differently by gay men and lesbians as a result of stereotypes around sexuality and relationships. Furthermore, the Commission's *Policy on HIV/AIDS-related Discrimination*^[12] recognizes that the erroneous perception of AIDS as a "gay disease" may have a disproportionate effect on gay men and may result in discrimination on the basis of both sexual orientation and perceived disability.^[13]

These are just a few examples of the complexity of the experience of discrimination when multiple grounds are involved. Many others have been identified in the Commission's policy work and complaints. Additional examples can be found throughout this paper and will continue to emerge as the Commission builds on its understanding of intersectionality.

Applying an intersectional or contextualized approach to multiple grounds of discrimination has numerous advantages. It acknowledges the complexity of how people experience discrimination, recognizes that the experience of discrimination may be unique and takes into account the social and historical context of the group. It places the focus on society's response to the individual as a result of the confluence of grounds and does not require the person to slot themselves into rigid compartments or categories. It addresses the fact that discrimination has evolved and tends to no longer be overt, but rather more subtle, multi-layered, systemic, environmental and institutionalized. Madame Justice L'Heureux-Dubé has summed up the benefits of this approach:

...categories of discrimination may overlap, and...individuals may suffer historical exclusion on the basis of both race and gender, age and physical handicap, or some other combination. The situation of individuals who confront multiple grounds of disadvantage is particularly complex. Categorizing such discrimination as primarily racially oriented, or primarily gender-oriented, misconceives the reality of discrimination as it is experienced by individuals.^[14]

Although an intersectional analysis is relevant to any combination of grounds, it has particular implications for race or race-related cases. Thus, the importance of recognizing the intersectionality of multiple forms of discrimination was emphasized in the United Nations World Conference Against Racism, Racial Discrimination, Xenophobia and Related Intolerance ("WCAR"), which was held in 2001 in South Africa.^[15] Moreover, it can be a useful strategy to link grounds of discrimination to the social, economic, political and legal environment that contributes to discrimination. Conditions (such as underemployment/ unemployment, poverty, homelessness) that may not be directly covered by the Ontario *Human Rights Code* (the "Code"), but nevertheless lead to high levels of disadvantage for vulnerable populations, could be included as part of the contextual analysis. Finally, an intersectional analysis can also be used to include human rights protections provided for in international conventions in the ambit of the *Code*.

Many scholars and advocates have argued that human rights claims should recognize that individuals have multiple identities and that these identities shape their experience of

discrimination. Within the Commission, there is a growing recognition that we can improve our understanding of the impact when grounds of discrimination intersect and that tools for applying an intersectional analysis will be very helpful in the handling of complaints, from inquiries through to litigation, and in our policy work. As little has been done by human rights agencies and courts in Canada, developing a framework for an intersectional analysis has the potential to be ground breaking.

^[6]M. Eaton, “Patently Confused, Complex Inequality and *Canada v. Mossop*” (1994) 1 Rev. Cons. Stud. 203 at 229.

^[7]C. A. Aylward, “Intersectionality: Crossing the Theoretical and Praxis Divide” (Paper Distributed at Transforming Women’s Future: Equality Rights in the New Century: A National Forum on Equality Rights presented by West Coast Leaf, 4 November 1999) [unpublished].

^[8]See *Time for Action: Advancing Human Rights for Older Ontarians*, *supra* note 3.

^[9]For example, *In Unison: A Canadian Approach to Disability Issues: A Vision Paper* (Federal/Provincial/Territorial Ministers Responsible for Social Services, 1998) notes, “persons with disabilities have a lower rate of employment as well as a lower participation rate in the labour force than those without disabilities” (at 36). Similarly, Canadian Race Relations Foundation, *Unequal Access: A Canadian Profile of Racial Differences in Education, Employment and Income* (Prepared for the Canadian Race Relations Foundation by the Canadian Council on Social Development, 2000) describes barriers to employment faced by racialized groups.

^[10]*In Unison: A Canadian Approach to Disability Issues: A Vision Paper*, *ibid.* at 39.

^[11]“The disproportionate share of domestic responsibilities assumed by women with disabilities has presented significant barriers to their labour force participation and has contributed to increased poverty for many of these women.” *ibid.* at 36. See also: D. Pothier, “Connecting Intersecting Grounds of Discrimination to Real People’s Real Experiences” (Paper Distributed at Transforming Women’s Future: Equality Rights in the New Century: A National Forum on Equality Rights presented by West Coast Leaf, 4 November 1999) [unpublished].

^[12](January 2000), online: Ontario Human Rights Commission <<http://www.ohrc.on.ca>>.

^[13]For example see *Moffat v. Kinark Child and Family Services (No. 4)* (1998), 35 C.H.R.R. D/205 (Ont. Bd. Inq.).

^[14]Madam Justice L’Heureux-Dubé writing for the minority in *Canada (A.G.) v. Mossop*, [1993] 1 S.C.R. 554 at 645-646 [hereinafter *Mossop*].

^[15]For example, in an opening address Mary Robinson, United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights and Secretary-General of the World Conference against Racism, stated:

You are also, I know, aware of the intersectionality of multiple forms of discrimination – how gender intersects with race, how sexual orientation intersects with race, how poverty intersects with race. This is a dimension which is deservedly receiving particular attention at this Conference. [online: Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights <<http://www.unchr.ch>> (date accessed: 27 September 2001)].

Other approaches to multiple grounds

As discussed above, the intersectional approach is the preferred one for complaints and cases that cite multiple grounds. Nevertheless, there are other ways in which multiple grounds matters are being handled by human rights bodies, courts and international bodies such as the United Nations (the “UN”). In some instances, the grounds are looked at sequentially to see whether discrimination can be made out on the basis of each one in turn. In other cases, a strategic choice is usually made regarding where to place the evidentiary focus of the complaint and the other grounds are not considered at all.^[16] A decision to eliminate another ground might be as a result of the difficulty in proving it, or because the case law may not be as well established in that area. Either of these two approaches really puts an emphasis on a single ground.

In other cases, one ground is seen as compounding discrimination on the basis of another ground so as to increase the overall burden of inequality.^[17] For example, in a situation where all women experience discrimination and all persons with disabilities experience discrimination, women with disabilities will face compounded disadvantage. One example might be a physical test as a pre-condition for employment. If the test disproportionately screens out women and disproportionately impacts persons with disabilities, a woman with a disability will face an accumulated burden and therefore compounded discrimination. This approach differs from an intersectional approach because it simply adds one form of discrimination to the other without recognizing that in fact something unique is being produced. Furthermore, it does not incorporate a contextualized approach which examines society’s response to the person as a result of the combination of grounds.

A review of human rights decisions across Canada, cases under s. 15 of the *Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms* (the “Charter”), and even international instruments and complaints, reveals that at present the most common approach to discrimination claims is one that tends to focus on a single ground. Current models for human rights and equality claims apply overarching principles in proving and remedying discrimination that do not always take into consideration the unique circumstances of the individual or the social context of the discrimination.

The current approach has been shaped by several factors. Human rights legislation evolved to address overt expressions of discrimination in public spheres. The social, legal and political climate of the time shaped the way in which the legislation developed and was implemented. Another contributing factor was the historical development of human rights legislation and the interpretation given to human rights. Human rights legislation was based on the United Nations’ Universal Declaration of Human Rights, which emphasized civil and political rights at the expense of economic, social and cultural rights and did not explicitly recognize the possibility of the intersection of grounds. Some have argued that the current approach has been informed by dominant political ideologies and philosophies such as liberalism in which the ‘subject’ is treated as independent, unitary, coherent and fixed.^[18]

In the sections that follow, discrimination cases involving multiple grounds will be analyzed. *Charter* cases, human rights complaints and complaints under international instruments in which an intersectional approach was not followed will be discussed and an

analysis of how the failure to do so led to problematic outcomes will be provided. By way of contrast and to illustrate how an intersectional approach can and should be applied, cases in which a more contextualized approach was used will be reviewed.

Human rights and "Charter" cases

Section 15 of the *Charter* guarantees the right to equality based on a list of ‘enumerated’ grounds, namely race, national or ethnic origin, colour, religion, sex, age and mental or physical disability. In addition, in appropriate cases, courts can recognize ‘analogous’ grounds of discrimination. With the exception of the Manitoba *Human Rights Code*, human rights statutes in Canada contain an enumerated list of grounds of discrimination with no power to recognize further grounds.

Some scholars have been critical of the focus on enumerated and analogous grounds in *Charter* and human rights cases for two primary reasons. The first relates to the fact that “a limited view of identity ensures that those persons who are unable to categorize or caricaturize themselves according to one of the enumerated categories find themselves “falling through the cracks” of Canadian equality and anti-discrimination law”.^[19] The second relates to situations in which there is sufficient evidence to find discrimination on the basis of one of the grounds, but to focus solely on that ground would do an injustice to the lived realities of those facing discrimination. In addition to failing to comprehend the complex nature the discrimination, the injustice can involve failing to fashion an appropriate remedy.

A frequently cited example of a case where the single ground approach has resulted in a discrimination claim being dismissed altogether is the majority decision of the Supreme Court of Canada in *Mossop*.^[20] The majority of the court has been criticized for preferring the least problematic categorization available, namely that Mr. Mossop’s claim of discrimination for being denied bereavement leave to attend the funeral of his same-sex partner’s father was a claim of discrimination on the basis of sexual orientation and not on the basis of family status.^[21] The majority decision was based on an assumption that the grounds of “family status” and “sexual orientation” were mutually exclusive. As the majority characterized the claim as based on sexual orientation, and due to the fact that at the time, sexual orientation was not a prohibited ground of discrimination in the *Canadian Human Rights Act*, Mr. Mossop’s claim failed despite the clear differential treatment he had experienced.

Other cases have ‘fallen through the cracks’ in the sense that discrimination has been found on one ground only, in a way that fails to comprehend the complexity of the claimant’s experience. One author surveyed race and sex discrimination cases reported in the Canadian Human Rights Reporter from 1980 to 1989 to see how Canadian human rights tribunals have responded to claims of discrimination brought by racial minority women.^[22] The first finding was that it was very difficult to find reference to racial minority women in the cases. The effect of this was that racial minority women and their unique experiences of discrimination seemed to ‘disappear’. Moreover, when cases involving racial minority claimants were found, there was no consideration in the tribunals’ decisions that racial minority women might be relevantly different from racial majority women or racial minority men. In other words, the cases distorted the women’s actual experiences, analogizing them to what would have happened to “raceless women or genderless racial minorities”.^[23]

Most of the scholarly literature available on the intersection of gender with other grounds focuses on the experience of women. Of course, as illustrated in the examples given throughout this paper, for many men, the intersection of gender with another ground of discrimination produces a unique experience of discrimination.

One common problem with not using an intersectional approach can be seen in many sexual discrimination and harassment cases. Stereotypes arising from particular combinations of race and gender are often the source of discriminatory treatment. Sexual harassment cases tend to proceed on the basis that the race, ethnic origin, ancestry of the alleged harasser and the complainant are not relevant. However, there may be stereotypes about the sexuality of women based on their race, ethnic origin, ancestry or place of origin. In one case where a Black woman was sexually harassed by her employer, the evidence revealed that he had said to her “that’s how black people make their living, by doing blow jobs” and the board even noted that the respondent made “a number of references to [the complainant’s] colour” during this testimony. Yet there was no serious consideration of how the complainant had been treated as a young Black woman and no finding of race discrimination.^[24] In sexual harassment cases, factors such as age, marital status, and sexual orientation can also be relevant.^[25]

In another case, involving sexual harassment of factory workers by their foreman, the board suggested that the sexual harassment was exacerbated by the complainants’ ethnic and linguistic characteristics as well as place of origin and immigration status:

It is clear that Mr. DeFilippis tried to intimidate and manipulate the female workers he desired sexually. He was in a position, as he knew, of being able to hire very dependent, immigrant female workers (very much needing work, not speaking English and being relatively inarticulate, and who perhaps appeared from their cultural backgrounds to more likely subject themselves to male authority) who he could seek to take sexual advantage.^[26]

To its credit the board did recognize that what was experienced by the complainants was not just a product of their gender but also other grounds. However, it did not find discrimination on the basis of race, ancestry, place of origin or ethnic origin. Nor was there any mention of these grounds as an exacerbating factor in the determination of an appropriate remedy.^[27]

In a single ground focused approach, the strategic decision as to where to place the ‘evidentiary focus’ of the claim is often based on which grounds are more ‘palatable’. Several authors have noted that this often results in race being erased. For example, *Alexander v. British Columbia*^[28] a First Nations woman who was partially blind and had a motor impairment affecting her gait and speech was refused service in a liquor store because the store manager thought she was drunk. Despite the fact that she asserted that the discrimination was on the basis of race, colour, ancestry and/or physical disability, the tribunal characterized the store manager’s refusal to believe her assertions about her disability as discrimination on the basis of disability only and did not consider whether stereotypes about Aboriginal women were at play.

Another common criticism is that the “law’s conception of race is so impoverished that it cannot seem to grasp differences between racial groups.”^[29] Persons who are not members of the dominant group tend to be viewed as a homogenous category of ‘not-white’, ‘racial minority’ or ‘visible minority’. Everyone within that group is treated as being the same and the particular stereotypes or forms of disadvantage that may be experienced by different persons based on

their particular identity are not acknowledged. For example, in *Wattley v. Quail*^[30], an apartment was not rented to a Black man. The respondent gave evidence that a potential tenant would have to be a “person who was compatible with her as she lived alone and she wanted a person with whom she felt comfortable and secure.”^[31] Evidence was given by another tenant, an East Asian woman, that the respondent was not racist because the respondent had rented an apartment to her. However, this did not address the fact that the respondent may have held stereotypes about Black men and may have viewed the complainant very differently based on his gender and race. In that case, the evidence of the other tenant was not successful in defeating the complaint. However, the case illustrates that evidence that a respondent has not discriminated against persons from a different racial background must be used carefully as it can result in a claim of discrimination being defeated, despite the fact that a person may have had a unique experience as a result of their particular identity.

Another concern with combining different racialized groups into a single category is that it tends to assume that only members of a dominant group can discriminate and that racial minorities cannot discriminate against each other.^[32] Future policy work on race ethnicity and origin will provide a more detailed analysis of the experience of racial discrimination.

Further evidence of the difficulty in grasping differences is illustrated by the tendency to treat race, colour, ethnic origin, ancestry and place of origin as a single category. This fails to recognize that these are separate grounds which may intersect to produce a qualitatively different experience for persons who are identified by more than one ground. For example, a recent Canadian Race Relations Foundation report concludes that within racialized groups, foreign-born persons face even greater disadvantage in employment.^[33]

It is important to note that although the discussion of intersectionality in the scholarly literature often focuses on the intersection of race with other grounds, in particular gender, the concept is applicable to all forms of multiple grounds discrimination. A single ground approach has resulted in inappropriate outcomes and the erasure of the complexity of the discrimination in cases involving any combination of grounds including race related grounds, age, disability, sexual orientation, creed and gender. The need for an intersectional approach is therefore necessary to apply a proper analysis, no matter what the combination of grounds involved.

The Commission’s approach to complaints

Complaints to the Ontario Human Rights Commission filed between April 1997 and December 2000 indicate that 48% of the complaints included more than one ground, while 52% cited only one ground of discrimination.

Table 1**Number of Cases with more than one ground**

Total number of cases filed by selected grounds	Race*	Age	Handicap	Sex	Receipt of Public Assistance
	4140	868	3303	2522	161
Number of cases with more than one ground					
Race		190	221	285	41
Age	190		134	131	33
Handicap	221	134		237	38
Sex	285	131	237		40
Receipt of Public Assistance	41	33	38	40	
Total	737	488	630	693	152

* The data on race includes the grounds of colour and place of origin^[34].

Fifty-six percent (56%) of age complaints included other grounds; 19% of complaints filed on the ground of handicap included multiple grounds; 27% of cases filed on the ground of sex included multiple grounds; 94% of complaints citing the ground of receipt of public assistance included other grounds^[35]. Of all the complaints filed, 18 % of 'race' cases included more than one ground. Unfortunately, due to the fact that race has traditionally been treated as also encompassing grounds such a colour and place of origin, this statistic may not be meaningful in reflecting the complexity of the race-related cases the Commission receives.

The approach followed by courts and tribunals in cases such as those discussed above are reinforced when these cases are incorporated into human rights policies and procedures. When decision-makers, as eminent as the Supreme Court, are struggling to apply a multiple grounds analysis, it is not surprising that human rights commissions are also having difficulty. At the same time, when commissions determine that there is sufficient evidence to proceed on a particular ground and not to pursue others, the case tends to be presented as such to the tribunal by commission counsel and will likely be determined on that ground alone.^[36] A self-reinforcing cycle can then be established in which human rights commissions and decision-makers each play a part in perpetuating a single ground focused approach.

During intake, potential complainants are asked to identify the grounds on which they believe discrimination or harassment occurred. Some will indicate all of the grounds that they feel may have been a factor while others may not realize the relevance of another ground. When it comes to light subsequently, usually during an investigation, if the complaint is not promptly amended, it may be too late. Concerns about procedural fairness may be triggered if there is a change in the nature of the case the respondent has to answer. Timeliness may also be an issue. Once the

complaint is referred to a board of inquiry, a party may only argue a new basis of liability without amending a complaint where it does not depend on the establishment of new factual allegations of which the respondent had no notice, the assertion of which could cause prejudice.^[37]

Unfortunately, the Commission's 1994 *Guidelines and Recommendations for Dealing with Race Cases from Intake to Board of Inquiry* do not discuss the need to address the intersection of race and race-related grounds with other grounds such as sex, disability and age to name just a few. Similarly, the Commission's Enforcement Manual does not provide explicit guidance on the intersection of grounds. In practice, all of the grounds mentioned in a complaint may not always be investigated. The simplest or most obvious ground may become the focus, with other grounds mentioned in passing or not at all. When all the grounds are investigated, rather than applying an intersectional approach, each ground may be treated as separate and not related to the others. This can result in a finding that there is insufficient evidence on any one ground to send a case to a board of inquiry, despite the fact that the person clearly experienced differential treatment. It can also result in inappropriate comparisons being made with persons identified by some but not all of the same grounds as the complainant.

In other cases, an intersectional approach to the multiple grounds is applied and an accurate picture of the discrimination is captured. For example, in an employment case involving a Black man from a country in Africa who had several children and a non-evident disability, viewing each ground separately, there did not appear to be enough evidence of discrimination on each ground alone to warrant a board of inquiry. Yet there was sufficient evidence that the complainant was experiencing differential treatment for reasons related to *Code* grounds and not just because of a personality conflict or job performance issues.^[38] Had the Commission treated each ground as a separate and unrelated category, the case would likely have been dismissed. However, the Commission concluded that the incidents that had occurred demonstrated that he had experienced discrimination on an intersection of grounds. In other words, a contextual analysis was used in which the full identity of the complainant was considered. The case was not about the complainant as an individual but rather the differential treatment he received as a result of the confluence of *Code* grounds.

A potential pitfall in investigating multiple grounds complaints is to compare the complainant to persons who only share some of the complainant's characteristics. For example, in a hypothetical case involving an allegation that an employer refused to promote a woman with a family because of a "glass ceiling" based on a presumption that women with young children are not sufficiently committed to their careers, it would not necessarily be appropriate to conclude that because the employer has women in management and men with children in senior positions, no discrimination has occurred. To the greatest extent possible, if comparisons are to be used, they should reflect all the aspects of the complainant's identity. In this hypothetical example, the experience of mothers with young children seeking to advance within the company would likely be the only meaningful comparison. If there are insufficient persons to compare to, it may be better to reflect the limited value of a comparison than to equate the complainant's situation to one that might be quite different because of the grounds involved. An intersectional analysis would recognize that comparisons must be used with great caution as an inappropriate comparison can lead to the dismissal of a case that should have been adjudicated.

Even where it is clear that there is enough evidence of discrimination on one ground alone, it may be appropriate to consider referring the case to the board of inquiry on the basis of all the grounds that make up the complainant's identity or on the basis of all of the grounds that might be relevant. For example, if a woman who is a recent immigrant alleges sexual harassment, it might also be appropriate to add the grounds of place of origin, citizenship and ethnic origin to ensure that the investigator and later the board of inquiry can consider whether part of the reason for the harassment was related to the woman's actual or perceived vulnerability as a recent immigrant, a perception about her sexuality based on her place of origin and so forth. Oral testimony, given under oath and subject to cross-examination, may be more successful in eliciting evidence about the complexity of the complainant's experience than a Commission investigation.

Jurisprudence of international bodies

To date, international bodies are proceeding largely on the basis of a single ground focused approach. The problem of multiple disadvantage and multiple discrimination, in particular as experienced by minority women, has not been acknowledged in the case law of the European Court of Human Rights and the Human Rights Committee.^[39] Monitoring bodies select one aspect of discrimination and largely ignore other simultaneous violations. This has resulted in a failure to address the totality of the problems and the structural disadvantages experienced by groups such as minority women.^[40]

In a case concerning Britain's denial to women with permanent residence permits the right to have their spouses join them in Britain, the European Court established a violation on the ground of sex but did not consider in any detail the issue of discrimination based on national origin or birth.^[41] This resulted in a comparison only on the basis of sex, *i.e.* female permanent residents were compared with male permanent residents, rather than a comparison based on sex and birth. A more appropriate comparison would have compared female permanent residents with male citizens thus showing the true extent of the discrimination.^[42]

Closer to home, a very significant example of the Human Rights Committee's failure to consider multiple grounds discrimination can be seen in *Lovelace v. Canada*.^[43] The case involved a complaint about Canada's *Indian Act* which provided that First Nations women would lose 'Indian status' and the associated rights upon marrying non-First Nations men. There was no similar loss of status for First Nations men marrying non-First Nations women. The Committee chose to focus on the issue of the right to culture, language and religion of persons belonging to minorities. Despite the strong sex discrimination aspect of the case, the Committee did not address in any substantial way the fact that Lovelace was denied the right to enjoy her culture *because she was a woman*.

The failure to address multiple grounds discrimination at the international level has important consequences. If the European Court of Human Rights or the Human Rights Committee establishes a violation, the states concerned are to amend the law or practice accordingly.^[44] Thus, an incomplete analysis can affect the remedy or outcome. As well, the cases are used as examples and precedents by other states when enacting or amending laws, writing their reports under various international instruments and applying principles before their own national courts.^[45]

^[16]For insight into why a claimant might choose to frame her case as sex rather than race-discrimination see E. Carasco, “A Case of Double Jeopardy: Race and Gender” (1993) 6 C.J.W.L. 142. Professor Carasco notes the difficulty identifying and proving the basis for the discriminatory conduct:

Proving systemic discrimination based on gender in my case was made possible by the availability of research and statistics relating to women in Canadian universities. Proving systemic discrimination based on the combination of race and gender would have been a lot more difficult simply because of the paucity of women of colour in Canadian universities and the corresponding lack of salary data. The issue of why there are so few women of colour in law faculties is a whole other story. As a woman of colour, I could not help wondering if it was indeed necessary to prove that other women of colour had been treated in a similar fashion before my own treatment, as a woman of colour, could be acknowledged. [at 152]

^[17]Intersectionality: Crossing the Theoretical and Praxis Divide, *supra* note 7.

^[18]See D. Kropp, “‘Categorical’ Failure: Canada’s Equality Jurisprudence – Changing Notions of Identity and the Legal Subject” (1997) 23 Queen’s L.J. 201, online: QL.

^[19]*Ibid.* at para. 1.

^[20]*Supra*, note 14.

^[21]See for example: J. Freeman, “Defining Family in *Mossop v. DSS*: The Challenge of Anti-Essentialism and Interactive Discrimination for Human Rights Legislation” (1994) 44 U.T.L.J. 41 and Patently Confused: Complex Inequality and *Canada v. Mossop*, *supra* note 6.

^[22]N. Duclos, “Disappearing Women: Racial Minority Women in Human Rights Cases” (1993) 6 C.J.W.L. 25 [hereinafter “Disappearing Women”].

^[23]*Ibid.* at 30.

^[24]*Cuff v. Gypsy Restaurant and Abi-ad* (1987), 8 C.H.R.R. D/3972 (Ont. Bd. Inq.) as discussed in *Disappearing Women*, *ibid.* at 34-5.

^[25]For a sexual harassment case in which the sexual orientation of the complainant was a factor in her experience, see *Crozier v. Asselstine* (1994), 22 C.H.R.R. D/244 (Ont. Bd. Inq.).

^[26]*Olarte v. DeFilippis and Commodore Business Machines Ltd.* (1983), 4 C.H.R.R. D/1705 (Ont. Bd. Inq.) [hereinafter *Olarte*].

^[27]Each complainant received general damages ranging from \$1,500 to \$4,000 plus interest and lost wages for a total award of \$21,000. For a further discussion of remedies see the section **The Move Towards an Intersectional Approach.**

^[28]*Disappearing Women*, *supra* note 22 at 45.

^[29]*Disappearing Women*, *supra* note 22 at 43.

^[30](1988), 9 C.H.R.R. D/5386 (B.C.C.H.R.).

^[31]*Ibid.* at D/5387.

^[32]*Disappearing Women*, *supra* note 22 at 43.

^[33]*Unequal Access: A Canadian Profile of Racial Differences in Education, Employment and Income*, *supra* note 9 .

^[34]The Commission’s tendency to link place of origin with grounds such as race, colour, ethnic origin will be receiving further consideration in future policy work on race, ethnicity and origin.

^[35]The statistic with respect to receipt of public assistance is not surprising given the relationship between low socio-economic status and other *Code* grounds. The Commission’s

Research Paper *Human Rights Commissions and Economic and Social Rights* (February, 2000) [unpublished], outlines in detail the relationship between poverty and being a member of a group identified by grounds such as gender, age, family and marital status, disability, race, ancestry, place of origin and citizenship.

[36] Disappearing Women, *supra* note 22 at 35.

[37] See *Vander Schaaf v. M & R Property Management Ltd.* (2000), 38 C.H.R.R. D/251 (Ont. Bd. Inq.) at para. 14 [hereinafter *Vander Schaaf*]. In that case, the Commission was denied its motion to amend the complaint to add “age” as a ground of discrimination.

[38] There were isolated incidents related to each of the complainant’s race, disability and family status. Looking at each ground alone, there may not have been sufficient evidence for a board. Yet it appeared clear that the complainant’s supervisor had issues with him as a Black man from Africa who needed time off due to family responsibilities and as a result of his non-evident disability. It was therefore, the intersection of grounds in this person that led to the discriminatory treatment.

[39] A.S. Åkermark, “Minority Women: International Protection and the Problem of Multiple Discrimination” in L. Hannikainen, E. Nykänen, eds., *New Trends in Discrimination Law – International Perspectives* (Turku: Turku Law School, 1999) 85 at 86. The discussion of the treatment of multiple discrimination in cases before international bodies is from this article.

[40] *Ibid.* at 99 and 100.

[41] *Abdulaziz, Cabales and Balkandali v. The United Kingdom*, ECHR Series A, No. 94 (1985).

[42] Åkermark, *supra* note 39 at 101-2.

[43] Views of the Human Rights Committee in UN Doc. A/36/40(1981).

[44] Åkermark, *supra* note 39 at 103.

[45] *Ibid.* At 104.

The move towards an intersectional approach

Multiple grounds in equality and human rights jurisprudence

Some courts and tribunals have started to acknowledge the need to make special provision for discrimination based on multiple grounds and to recognize the social, economic and historical context in which it takes place. However, despite these advancements, the courts’ understanding of a proper intersectional approach is still in its infancy. What follows is a discussion of recent cases in which a move towards a multiple grounds or intersectional analysis is evidenced in either a majority or dissenting opinion.

Supreme Court of Canada

Recently, decisions of the Supreme Court of Canada have included comments on multiple grounds of discrimination and intersecting grounds. In some of these decisions, the social context and life experiences of persons who suffer discrimination are discussed. The perspective of the individual is reaffirmed.

Writing for the minority in the *Mossop* case, Madam Justice L'Heureux-Dubé remarked, "it is increasingly recognized that categories of discrimination may overlap, and that individuals may suffer historical exclusion on the basis of both race and gender, age and physical handicap or some other combination." She further commented that:

...categorizing such discrimination as primarily racially oriented, or primarily gender-oriented, misconceives the reality of discrimination as it is experienced by individuals. Discrimination may be experienced on many grounds, and where this is the case, it is not really meaningful to assert that it is one or the other. It may be more realistic to recognize that both forms of discrimination may be present and intersect.

She went on to comment on the way to deal with multiple forms of discrimination where both grounds are prohibited:

On a practical level, where both forms of discrimination are prohibited, one can ignore the complexity of the interaction, and characterize the discrimination as one type or the other. The person is protected from discrimination in either event.

However, though multiple levels of discrimination may exist, multiple levels of protection may not. There are situations where a person suffers discrimination on more than one ground, but where only one form of discrimination is a prohibited ground. When faced with such situations, one should be cautious not to characterize the discrimination so as to deprive the person of any protection. ... One should not lightly allow a characterization which excludes those from the scope of the Act who should legitimately be included.^[46]

While being generally positive about L'Heureux-Dubé's J.'s recognition of intersecting grounds of discrimination, many commentators have been critical of her suggestion that where both forms of discrimination are prohibited, one can just select one of the grounds. This represents a return to the traditional single ground focused approach and does not reflect an intersectional analysis. This comment likely arose owing to the facts of the case and L'Heureux-Dubé J.'s words nevertheless represent an important first step in recognizing the intersection of multiple grounds.

In a subsequent decision, *Egan*, L'Heureux-Dubé J., once again in a dissenting opinion, reiterated that categories of discrimination cannot be reduced to watertight compartments, but rather will often overlap in significant measure. Awareness of, and sensitivity to, the realities of those experiencing discrimination is an important task that judges must undertake when evaluating the impact of the distinction on members of an affected group.^[47]

More recently, in its majority decision in *Law v. Canada*^[48], the Supreme Court recognized that a discrimination claim can present an intersection of grounds that are a synthesis of those listed in s. 15(1) or are analogous to them:

... it is open to a claimant to articulate a discrimination claim under more than one of the enumerated and analogous grounds. Such an approach to the grounds of discrimination accords with the essential purposive and contextual nature of equality analysis under s. 15(1) of the Charter. Where a party brings a discrimination claim on the basis of a newly postulated analogous ground, or on the basis of a combination of different grounds, this part of the

discrimination inquiry must focus upon the issue of whether and why a ground or confluence of grounds is analogous to those listed in s. 15 (1). This determination is made on the basis of a complete analysis of the purpose of s. 15(1), the nature and situation of the individual or group at issue, and the social, political and legal history of Canadian society's treatment of the group. A ground or grounds will not be considered analogous under s. 15 (1) unless it can be shown that differential treatment premised on the ground or grounds has the potential to bring into play human dignity.... If the court determines that recognition of a ground or confluence of grounds as analogous would serve to advance the fundamental purpose of s. 15(1), the ground or grounds will then be so recognized.^[49]

The Court further stated:

There is no reason in principle, therefore, why a discrimination claim positing an intersection of grounds cannot be understood as analogous to, or as a synthesis of, the grounds listed in s. 15 (1).^[50]

Subsequent to *Law*, the Supreme Court applied this analysis to recognize a new analogous ground of discrimination, namely "aboriginality-residence." In *Corbière v. Canada*^[51] the court considered a provision of the *Indian Act* which barred band members who live off-reserve from voting in band elections. In establishing the new analogous ground the court noted that the group experiencing differential treatment was based on a combination of traits, namely being Aboriginal persons who are band members but living off a reserve. L'Heureux-Dubé J.'s decision also noted the particular adverse impact that the impugned law had on Aboriginal women because of the history of their involuntary loss of Indian status:

Aboriginal women, who can be said to be **doubly disadvantaged** on the basis of both sex and race, are among those particularly affected by legislation relating to off-reserve band members, because of their history and circumstances in Canadian and Aboriginal society.^[52] [Emphasis Added.]

Furthermore, in describing whether recognition of an analogous ground will further the purposes of s. 15(1) of the *Charter*, L'Heureux-Dubé J. noted:

The second stage [of the s. 15(1) inquiry] must therefore be flexible enough to adapt to stereotyping, prejudice, or denials of human dignity and worth that might occur in specific ways for specific groups of people, to recognize that personal characteristics may overlap or intersect (such as race, band membership, and place of residence in this case), and to reflect changing social phenomena or new or different forms of stereotyping or prejudice.^[53]

The decision places a significant emphasis on a contextual approach that recognizes stereotyping, prejudice or denials of human dignity may occur in specific ways for specific groups of people and that personal characteristics may overlap or intersect.

The inability to recognize new analogous grounds under the *Code* does not mean that these Supreme Court of Canada cases are inapplicable to the Commission's work. Rather they represent an important first step in acknowledging that grounds are not rigid, watertight compartments and in signalling a move towards an intersectional and contextualized approach. As the approach to human rights and *Charter* cases should be as congruous as possible^[54], this

evolution in the Supreme Court's jurisprudence signals a need for human rights bodies to follow by applying existing grounds in a manner that most promotes an intersectional approach.

Courts and Tribunals

Several notable decisions recognizing the relationship between multiple grounds have come out of Canadian courts and human rights tribunals.

One of the earliest and most significant decisions is that of the Nova Scotia Court of Appeal in *Dartmouth/Halifax County Regional Housing Authority v. Sparks*^[55]. In that case, the court recognized that in considering whether legislation has a discriminatory effect, regard must be had to the characteristics shared by persons comprising the group adversely affected. The Court recognized that discrimination is the combined effect of multiple factors, including poverty:

As a general proposition persons who qualify for public housing are the economically disadvantaged and are so disadvantaged because of their age and correspondingly low incomes (seniors) or families with low incomes, a majority of whom are disadvantaged because they are single female parents on social assistance, many of whom are black [sic]. The public housing tenants group as a whole **is historically disadvantaged as a result of the combined effect of several personal characteristics listed in s. 15(1).**^[56] [Emphasis Added.]

In a significant Ontario human rights case, *Kearney v. Bramalea Ltd. (No. 2)*^[57] a very similar approach was followed but in the context of a complaint under the *Code*. The case involved the use of rent-to-income ratios to determine eligibility for rental accommodation. Expert witnesses provided the board of inquiry with evidence that the rent-to-income ratios operated to exclude certain socially disadvantaged groups who were statistically more likely to never meet the required ratio. The statistical evidence presented noted the particular situation of persons who present an intersection of grounds, such as single mothers, young single women, single First Nations women, single Black women, single South Asian women, single women from Africa, non-citizen female single parents and unattached women on social assistance.

The tribunal accepted evidence that the use of criteria had a disparate impact on individuals based on their age, sex, race, family status, marital status, citizenship, place of origin and the receipt of public assistance. The tribunal acknowledged that the evidence presented noted the importance of recognizing that many "groups" intersect and overlap substantially.^[58] The tribunal found discrimination on the basis of every ground cited in each complaint. For example, in the case of Catarina Luis, a single Black mother, a refugee from Angola, and in receipt of family benefits assistance, the board concluded discrimination on the basis of race, sex, marital status, family status, citizenship, place of origin and receipt of public assistance.

In the subsequent decision of *Vander Schaaf*, the board of inquiry once again reverted to an approach that primarily looked at the alleged grounds of discrimination, namely age, sex and marital status, in isolation instead of giving full consideration to their intersectional effect. In another recent decision in which the complainant, a single mother on social assistance, alleged she was denied rental accommodation because of her source of income and her marital and family status, the tribunal noted that "in order to prove her complaint, the complainant need only establish that one or more of these grounds was one of the factors in the respondent's denial of

tenancy”^[59] While this approach may be technically accurate, it tends to negate the complexity of discrimination faced by groups such as single mothers in receipt of social assistance. It should, therefore, only be followed where evidence supports only one ground and not where the discrimination is clearly based on an intersection of grounds. In those cases, all grounds should be recognized, investigated and, if there is evidence to warrant, sent to a board on the totality of grounds.

In *Falkiner v. Ontario (Ministry of Community and Social Services, Income Maintenance Branch)*, the Ontario Divisional Court followed *Sparks* and *Corbière* to find that “the recognition of the Respondents as members of a group suffering discrimination by reason of their status as sole support mothers on social assistance, a basis analogous to the enumerated grounds, would advance the fundamental purpose of s. 15(1), the protection of human dignity.”^[60]

In *Irshad (Litigation guardian of) v. Ontario (Minister of Health)*^[61], the Court recognized that the reason the claimants were not eligible for OHIP coverage, the basis for the *Charter* claim, was not because they were disabled or immigrants, but because they were immigrants with a disability. Had they not been disabled they would have been able to satisfy the medical requirements under the *Immigration Act* and thereby entitled to OHIP coverage. Had they been born in Ontario they would also have been entitled even with the same disabilities. Despite this acknowledgement of the effect of the intersection of grounds, the court’s decision to dismiss the *Charter* challenge lacked an assessment of the intersectionality of the grounds of disability and immigration status. On appeal, the Court accepted that but for their disabilities, the claimants would have been eligible for OHIP. However, it concluded that the eligibility criteria used by Ontario were based on immigration status. It was the federal immigration authorities who decided that physical disabilities rendered the claimants ineligible for landed immigrant status. The adverse effect caused by selecting criteria, namely immigration status, that were based on disability, was not considered.

In *Rivers v. Squamish Indian Council*,^[62] the tribunal examined a discrimination claim based on more than one enumerated ground. The complainant, an Aboriginal woman whose national and ethnic origin was Gitskan, alleged that she was discriminated against because she was a “married in” as opposed to a blood born member of the Squamish Band and was not connected to one of the “chiefly families.”^[63] The dissenting member of the tribunal recognized that the complaint was based on multiple grounds *i.e.* national/ethnic status and family status and stated that the alleged grounds had been analyzed separately but that the two grounds are very closely related and in fact overlap.^[64] While indicating that the dimension of the interaction of multiple grounds or the concept of intersectionality would be relied upon, the dissenting member then proceeded to analyze the case by dealing with each ground in turn rather than dealing with the effect of their intersection. This type of approach illustrates the desire on the part of decision-makers to acknowledge an intersectional approach despite the fact that they are, in some instances, unsure how to apply an intersectional analysis to the facts.

One case provides an excellent example of a tribunal expressly recognizing the intersection of race and sex in finding discrimination. In *Frank v. A.J.R. Enterprises Ltd. (c.o.b. “Nelson Place Hotel”)*,^[65] the majority of the clientele of the respondent’s hotel was Aboriginal. However, the complainant and other Aboriginal women found themselves evicted from their rooms or denied

service at the lounge on several occasions. The respondent sought to argue that as it primarily served Aboriginal persons, it would not have discriminated against the complainant. (Essentially the respondent argued that as it does not discriminate against other Aboriginal persons, it could not have discriminated against the complainant.) The tribunal looked at the historical context of the treatment of Aboriginal persons in Canada:

...it is not inconceivable for an agency, a business, a nation, or a people, to maintain business dealings with a people it holds in contempt and to blatantly discriminate against it **or a class within it....** To hold Native people in contempt while taking every dollar from them is not an unheard of business practice in our history. The Respondent's actions and practices, to say the least, smack of this negative attitude toward **aboriginal women as a class of people.**^[66] [Emphasis Added.]

The tribunal took offence to the respondent's insinuation that the complainant was a prostitute: "What is particularly offensive about this is the assumption that she is a prostitute because she is a single Native woman in a hotel by herself".^[67] The tribunal used strong language about the intersection of race and sex and compensated the complainant for the indignity of both race and sex discrimination:

I recognize that this is not the platform for me to pontificate about the evils of sexism and racism, but suffice it to say that **sexism and racism do often intersect to the degree that sometimes one is unsure which of these two forces is at work.** Nevertheless, I wish to draw attention to the magnitude of the complaint, **to the intersection of sex and race discrimination which, in my view, is the essence of this complaint,** and to the indignity suffered by the Complainant. I also wish to draw attention to the fact that that attitude and conduct of the Respondent seems to me to **reflect a pattern of malignant and contemptuous sexism intertwined with callous racism and disregard for the basic dignity, humanity and feelings of aboriginal women.**^[68] [Emphasis Added.]

Increasingly, tribunals and courts are recognizing a need for an intersectional analysis. After having acknowledged the need for an intersectional approach, courts and tribunals are meeting with varying degrees of success in applying such an analysis to the determination of whether discrimination has occurred. In some cases, the analysis takes into account the effect of the existence of multiple grounds, while in others the decision-makers tend to revert back to a sequential analysis of each ground in isolation. Nevertheless, some significant developments have occurred and include: (1) a recognition by the Supreme Court that an intersection of grounds can be recognized as a new analogous ground where social context, historical disadvantage and essential human dignity are involved,^[69] (2) the application of a contextual analysis, focusing on society's response to the individual and its construction of identity, that includes examination of historical disadvantage, social, political and cultural context and socio-economic issues,^[70] (3) the use of statistical evidence to illustrate the particular circumstances of groups identified by an intersection of grounds,^[71] (4) findings of discrimination based on all the grounds that make up a complainant's identity and not just those that are the least complex or controversial,^[72] and (5) the rejection of individuals or groups that are identified by some but not all of the same grounds as the complainant as being inappropriate for comparison to the complainant.^[73]

Remedies

Although courts and tribunals have acknowledged the reality of discrimination on more than one ground, there are no clear directions on dealing with remedies in these types of claims. There is very little evidence to show that remedies awarded in human rights complaints consider multiple or intersecting grounds of discrimination. While some tribunal decisions acknowledge that discrimination may be experienced at multiple levels, this appears not to be reflected in awards or remedies. For example, although extensive documentation was presented in *Kearney* on the impact of the landlord's policy on multiple grounds of discrimination, the remedies did not recognize or address the multiple effects of the discrimination. In *Olarte*, the court recognized that the respondent took advantage of the particularly vulnerable status of his dependent, immigrant female workers who very much needed work, may not have spoken English and perhaps appeared from their cultural backgrounds to be more likely to subject themselves to male authority. Despite recognizing their particularly disadvantaged status, the remedy given did not acknowledge that more harm may have been occasioned thereby.

In *Crozier*, the respondent had tried to pursue a sexual relationship with the complainant, a lesbian, by trying to convince her that there were problems with her current sex life that could be remedied by having a heterosexual relationship with him. The tribunal acknowledged that "the respondent's conduct amounts to harassment because of sexual orientation as well as sexual harassment."^[74] The tribunal relied on an analogy of a hypothetical case between a complainant and respondent of different races and concluded that a similar situation would constitute racial as well as sexual harassment. Counsel for the complainant urged that separate amounts be awarded. While the tribunal accepted that "the element of harassment for sexual orientation adds weight to the sexual harassment committed by the respondent" and that the complainant's vulnerability was "undoubtedly increased by the fact that as a lesbian, she was a member of a marginalized group",^[75] the tribunal concluded that "the violation of the two provisions of the *Code* are closely intertwined, and neither one doubles the effect of the other."^[76]

In *Egan*, L'Heureux-Dubé J. drew an interesting analogy to demonstrate the impact that an act of discrimination can have on different groups:

No one would dispute that two identical projectiles, thrown at the same speed, may nonetheless leave a different scar on two different types of surfaces. Similarly, groups that are more socially vulnerable will experience the adverse effects of a legislative distinction more vividly than if the same distinction were directed at a group which is not similarly socially vulnerable.^[77]

Similarly in *Sparks*, the Nova Scotia Court of Appeal looked at the impact of Ms Spark's characteristics (a person of colour [Black], a woman, a sole support mother, a social assistance recipient, a subsidized tenant, and a poor person) and the disadvantaging effect of the legislative provisions in question, in a global and cumulative way – the way in which Irma Sparks herself experienced them.^[78]

In *Ghosh v. Domglas*^[79], a complaint of harassment because of disability, the tribunal introduced the issue of race, although this was not alleged in the complaint, to note that this may have had an effect on the injury suffered:

...while there is nothing to suggest that Mr. Ghosh was harassed because of his race, in considering damages it is to be considered that the wrongdoer takes his victim as he finds him. His membership in a visible minority may have had nothing to do with the harassment, but I have no doubt that that fact was a subjective element in increasing his vulnerability and anguish...^[80]

As the aim of human rights remedies is, in part, to restore the person to the position she would have been in if the discrimination had not occurred, the damage to the person as a result of the discrimination is a critical factor to consider. In this regard, L'Heureux-Dubé's acknowledgement that persons who are more socially vulnerable will experience greater impact is significant for the purposes of determining remedies for multiple and intersecting discrimination. Therefore, while in some cases, a more significant award may not be warranted, there may be some situations in which the particular vulnerability of the person, as a result of the intersectionality of grounds, should be acknowledged in the damages for injured dignity, mental anguish and so forth.^[81] It could be another factor to be considered in determining the extent of the complainant's injury as a result of the discrimination or harassment.

Aside from monetary compensation, a *Task Force on Gender Equality in the Legal Profession* (the "*Task Force*") has suggested that the best way of remedying and preventing systemic discrimination (multiple grounds discrimination being one component) is through the equality principles of affirmative action and the human rights principle of the duty to accommodate.^[82] The *Task Force* notes that equality rights law, which applies the contextual approach, provides the rationale for affirmative action programs that "acknowledge that existing social and legal arrangements have actively benefited certain groups and disadvantaged others... [and] aim to restore the balance."^[83] The *Code* allows historical disadvantage to be remedied on a proactive basis through *special programs* (s. 14), designed to relieve hardship or economic disadvantage faced by disadvantaged persons or groups.

The duty to accommodate is also a central principle in human rights law and can result in institutional policies, practices and standards being transformed to respond to the needs of different groups.^[84] The Supreme Court's decision in *British Columbia (Public Service Employee Relations Commission) v. BCGSEU* has noted the need for employers, service providers and others to design neutral rules and standards in a way that is as inclusive as possible.^[85] This could include a consideration of persons who are identified by an intersection of grounds. Possible remedies could therefore include requiring respondents to establish standards that provide for individual accommodation of persons who present with complex identities.

Academic research on multiple and intersecting identities

Recognizing the need to address the fact that people's unique experience of discrimination may not be captured by a single ground focused human rights approach, researchers and academics have suggested the use of an intersectional analysis.

Several authors have examined the issue of multiple and intersecting identities and their relationship to people's experience in the social, economic, political and legal environment. Several socio-economic reports and research studies documenting individuals' experiences in

society, the workplace and other social spheres highlight the importance of multiple factors that constitute identities and recognize its importance not only in human rights discourse but in human rights policy development as well. Esmeralda Thornhill,^[86] Nitya Iyer (formerly Duclos),^[87] Emily Carasco,^[88] and Carol A. Aylward^[89] are several scholars who have studied the issue of the intersection of race and gender and have written about the situation of individuals who confront multiple grounds of disadvantage. Celia Rothenberg,^[90] writing about the Palestinian community in Toronto, notes the diversity among Palestinian women and observes that the differences among women's lives are "not entirely due to individual idiosyncrasies or circumstances. Rather, these women's lives provide illustrations of how larger socio-economic factors play themselves out within the Palestinian community."^[91] Pointing to the differing political viewpoints and religious identities, she writes that it is important for policy makers and analysts of culture to recognize diversity, rather than rely on generalizations.

In an article explaining the need for educator sensitivity to the connections between race, gender and social class, Goli Rezai-Rashti^[92] writes about the tendency of equity issues to be compartmentalized or discussed as separate subjects with the result that a systematic analysis of the relational nature of gender, race and social class is lost to teachers and students. In addition, Rezai-Rashti describes a lack of cultural sensitivity or of an understanding of the complexity of equity issues as alienating minority-students. For example, Rezai-Rashti writes of a group of female Muslim Somali students who felt that "because of their socio-economic status, race, culture, religion, and, last but not least, their gender, they were perceived by other students, and sometimes by their teachers, as inherently inferior in terms of a pseudo-hierarchical order with other cultural and religious groups in their school. Because of their religion (Islam) and gender, they came to believe that other students thought of them as submissive, obedient, oppressed, and even mutilated individuals incapable of experiencing any sort of sexual pleasure".^[93] The students reported that a 1995 CBC program on female genital mutilation generated racism in their school and contributed to creating an environment that made it easier for other students to "persist in their harassment" because the information presented was "decontextualized" and demeaned their culture and background.^[94]

In Rezai-Rashti's analysis, many teachers view issues of race, class and culture from an essentialist perspective, *i.e.* a viewpoint in which women are seen as stable, homogenous and undifferentiated, rather than in a "non-essentialist, unstable, and conflicting way".^[95] According to Rezai-Rashti, an essentialist perspective would label specific cultures as backward because of their oppressive treatment of women, whereas a non-essentialist perspective would help students "develop a more critical understanding of racism, sexism, and class issues across cultures".^[96]

Carl F. Stychin has applied an intersectional analysis in examining nationalism and identity in Canada, focusing on the constitutional recognition of sexual orientation as analogous ground of discrimination^[97].

For women with disabilities, an analysis based on intersecting grounds, with its focus on the perspective of the claimant and the contextual approach, would address concerns that their unique experiences are not recognized in human rights procedures and policy development. Diane Pothier, for example, writes that her experiences are defined by the fact that she is a woman with a disability.^[98]

The *Task Force* has written that the legal concept of equality requires consideration of several inter-related concepts: the formal/substantive equality dichotomy; the contextual approach; discrimination and multiple discrimination.^[99] The *Task Force* addresses the issue of multiple discrimination as experienced by female lawyers and describes it as consisting of:

...the cumulative and compounding effect of discrimination based on several group characteristics. It is difficult, if not impossible, to untangle discrimination based on gender and other characteristics such as race...

It is critical to appreciate that the experience of multiple discrimination is different from the experiences of differential treatment based on one ground of discrimination. It is not always easy to appreciate this distinction because of the mainstream perspective on discrimination. ...

Racial and gender discrimination can occur simultaneously and are both rooted in society at large, including the legal and justice systems. Both individual and systemic discrimination can be traced to hardened attitudes and commonly involve rigid stereotypes stressing ethnic differences at the expense of those who cannot confirm to the status quo...

Aboriginal women lawyers also face sexual and racial discrimination in the profession. In addition, they have unique concerns emanating from being First Nation Individuals. ... Similarly lesbians must deal with negative stereotypes and pressure to be like their heterosexual colleagues. ... Women lawyers with disabilities are faced with a great deal of ignorance concerning their ability to function as lawyers.^[100]

This is indicative of the increasing use of the concepts of multiple and intersecting identities as a tool to determine how discrimination may be experienced in unique ways.

Finally, in the recent discussions surrounding the potential amendment of the *Canadian Human Rights Act*, authors have noted the need for investigators and adjudicators to perceive the particularities of discrimination experienced by, for example, Aboriginal women, Black women, women with disabilities, lesbians and single mothers and have suggested that a revised *Act* should specifically state that:

...the purpose of the Act is to address those forms of discrimination that too easily disappear from view because of the compartmentalization of grounds, that is, overlapping forms of discrimination experienced by Aboriginal women, women of colour, immigrant women, women with disabilities, lesbians, single mothers and older women.^[101]

^[46] *Mossop*, *supra* note 14 at para. 53-54.

^[47] *Egan*, *supra* note 1 at 563.

^[48] [1999] 1 S.C.R. 497 [hereinafter *Law*].

^[49] *Ibid.* at 554-5.

^[50] *Ibid.*

^[51] [1999] 2 S.C.R. 203 [hereinafter *Corbière*].

^[52] *Ibid.* at 259.

^[53] *Ibid.* at 253.

- [54] *British Columbia (Public Service Employee Relations Commission) v. BCGSEU*, [1999] 3 S.C.R. 3 [hereinafter “*Meiorin*”].
- [55] (1993), 101 D.L.R. (4th) 224 (N.S.C.A.) [hereinafter *Sparks*].
- [56] *Ibid.* at 234.
- [57] (1998), 34 C.H.R.R. D/1 (Ont. Bd. Inq.) [hereinafter *Kearney*]. The decision of the Superior Court of Justice, Divisional Court confirms the Board of Inquiry’s approach and treatment of the expert evidence: *Shelter Corp. v. Ontario (Human Rights Comm.)* (2001), 39 C.H.R.R. D/111 (Ont. Sup. Ct.).
- [58] *Kearney*, *ibid.* at D/16.
- [59] *Birchall v. Guardian Properties Ltd.* (2000), 38 C.H.R.R. D/83 at para. 30 (BCHRT).
- [60] [2000] O.J. No. 2433 (Div. Ct.), online: QL. This decision is under appeal.
- [61] (1999), 60 C.R.R. (2d) 231 (Ont. Gen. Div.); *aff’d* 197 D.L.R. (4th) 103 (Ont. C.A.).
- [62] *Rivers v. Squamish Indian Council*, [1994] C.H.R.T. No. 3 No. T.D. 3/94 [hereinafter *Rivers*].
- [63] *Ibid.* at 93-94.
- [64] *Ibid.* at 97.
- [65] (1993), 23 C.H.R.R. D/228 (BCCHR) [hereinafter *Frank*].
- [66] *Ibid.* at D/232.
- [67] *Ibid.* at D/233.
- [68] *Ibid.* at D/234.
- [69] *Law*, *supra* note 48 and *Corbière*, *supra* note 52.
- [70] *Frank*, *supra* note 65, *Sparks*, *supra* note 56 and *Kearney*, *supra* note 57.
- [71] *Kearney*, *ibid.*
- [72] *Kearney*, *ibid.* and *Frank*, *supra* note 65.
- [73] *Frank*, *ibid.* and *Corbière* *supra* note 52.
- [74] *Supra*, note 25 at D/247.
- [75] *Ibid.* at D/248.
- [76] *Ibid.* at D/249.
- [77] *Egan*, *supra* note 1 at 553.
- [78] M. Jackman, “Constitutional Contact with the Disparities in the World: Poverty as a Prohibited Ground of Discrimination Under the Canadian *Charter* and Human Rights Law” (1994) 2 *Review of Constitutional Studies* 76 .
- [79] *Ghosh v. Domglas Inc. (No. 2)* (1992), 17 C.H.R.R. D/216 (Ont. Bd. Inq.).
- [80] *Ibid.* at para. 21.
- [81] One author has suggested that in the highly discretionary category of compensation for humiliation and suffering (*i.e.* general damages), the tribunal’s perceptions of all the characteristics of the complainant should come into play; see *Disappearing Women*, *supra* note 22 at 41.
- [82] Canadian Bar Association Task Force on Gender Equality in the Legal Profession, *Touchstones for Change: Equality, Diversity and Accountability* (Ottawa: The Canadian Bar Association, 1993) (Chair: The Hon. Bertha Wilson) at 16-17.
- [83] *Ibid.* at 16.
- [84] *Ibid.* at 17.
- [85] *Supra*, note 54 at para. 68.
- [86] E. Thornhill, “Regard sur le racisme: Perspectives juridiques à partir d’un vécu noir” (1993) 6 C.J.W.L. 1 and E. Thornhill, “Focus on Racism: Legal Perspectives from a Black Experience” (1994) *Currents* 8, discussed in C. A. Aylward, *Canadian Critical Race Theory: Racism and the Law* (Halifax: Fernwood, 1999) at 45.

- [87] N. Iyer, "Categorical Denials: Equality Rights and the Shaping of Social Identity" (1993) 19 Queen's L.J. 179; *Disappearing Women*, *supra*, note 22.
- [88] A Case of Double Jeopardy: Race and Gender, *supra*, note 16.
- [89] Intersectionality: Crossing the Theoretical and Praxis Divide, *supra*, note 7.
- [90] C. E. Rothenberg, "Diversity and Community: Palestinian Women in Toronto" (1999) 19 Canadian Woman Studies 75.
- [91] *Ibid.* at 76.
- [92] G. Rezai-Rashti, "Gender Equity Issues and Minority Students: Connections of Race, Gender and Social Class" (1997) 28 ORBIT: Ontario's Magazine for Schools 24.
- [93] *Ibid.* at 24.
- [94] *Ibid.* at 25.
- [95] *Ibid.*
- [96] *Ibid.*
- [97] C. F. Stychin, "A Postmodern Constitutionalism: Equality Rights, Identity Politics and the Canadian National Imagination" (1994) 17 Dalhousie L. J. 61.
- [98] Connecting Intersecting Grounds of Discrimination to Real People's Real Experiences, *supra*, note 11.
- [99] *Touchstones for Change: Equality, Diversity and Accountability*, *supra*, note 82 at 12.
- [100] *Ibid.* at 15.
- [101] S. Day & G. Brodsky, "Women's Economic Inequality and the *Canadian Human Rights Act*" (Ottawa: Status of Women Canada, October 1999), online: Status of Women Canada <<http://www.swc-cfc.gc.ca/research>>.

Applying an intersectional approach

An intersectional analysis based upon a two-pronged approach has been suggested by Professors Aylward, Pothier, and Iyer. It requires a shift from a single ground perspective to an analysis based on the assumption that an individual's experiences are based on multiple identities that can be linked to more than one ground of discrimination. The second component of the two-pronged model requires the analysis to proceed to consider contextual factors, based on the facts of the case. According to Aylward, a contextual analysis means examining the discriminatory stereotypes; the purpose of the legislation, regulation or policy; the nature of and / or situation of the individual at issue, and the social, political and legal history of the person's treatment in society.

An intersectional analysis can be informed by developments in gender equality analysis, critical race analysis, disability rights analysis and equality rights jurisprudence. These strategies have developed to address the stereotypes, as well as the unique and intersecting experiences of individuals, because of race or gender or disability and would form a necessary part of the contextual and analytical framework. An intersectional analysis can become one of the lenses through which the social context of the individual can be examined. In some measure, it can address social conditions relating to poverty, low income and homelessness.

In some cases, grounds such as sex, race, or disability, to name just a few, may intersect and together produce unique effects creating "discreet and insular minorities" who are socially handicapped because of these characteristics. At other times, any one of these characteristics may intersect with other grounds such as social assistance, family status and further link to economic and social and class status to create unique experiences for the individuals that are ignored in the current human rights framework. Even when combined with other grounds such as social assistance and family status, the extent of the discrimination may not be revealed by a traditional, non-intersectional approach.

This paper has explored the need for a more holistic understanding of how people experience discrimination. The Commission has already started applying an intersectional approach to some of the complaints that have come before it. In addition, an intersectional analysis has been added as one of the lenses through which policy work is conducted. An understanding of discrimination as largely a product of the social construction of identity, based on social, historical, political and cultural factors, is informing the Commission's work in all areas. The Commission's new framework for protecting the rights of persons with disabilities, as set out in its *Policy and Guidelines on Disability and the Duty to Accommodate*, is an example of this.

The Commission has an opportunity to build on the work that has been done to date by searching for more concrete ways to implement intersectionality in all aspects of its mandate. This paper represents the first phase of this effort. It has endeavoured to review human rights and *Charter* cases as well as literature with a view to analyzing shortcomings where an intersectional analysis has not been applied. It outlines positive developments that can guide the Commission in the application of an intersectional approach. It is a starting point to stimulate further discussion of how the Commission can operationalize an intersectional approach.

The next step is to involve all areas of the Commission as well as outside expertise in a process of consultation. The Commission would therefore invite comment on this Discussion Paper and, in particular, on practical ways in which an intersectional approach can be applied in all areas of the Commission's work including: intake and drafting of complaints, mediation, investigation, litigation and policy and education. Written submissions will be accepted until **October 31, 2002** and may be sent to:

Ontario Human Rights Commission
Intersectionality Consultation
Policy and Education Branch
180 Dundas Street West, 7th Floor
Toronto, Ontario
M7A 2R9

Fax: (416) 314-4533

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Roopa Dhatt: advancing gender equality in global health leadership

Aarathi Prasad

Published: November 07, 2020 DOI: [https://doi.org/10.1016/S0140-6736\(20\)32285-6](https://doi.org/10.1016/S0140-6736(20)32285-6)

When Roopa Dhatt was 9 years old, she went into septic shock as a result of appendicitis. Her grandparents rushed her to a local hospital in India. Far from her home in the USA and apart from her émigré parents, who could not afford to join her, the experience is etched in Dhatt's memory. "In the early 1990s", she says, "the health system infrastructure [in India] was so weak, and so under-resourced, I was really fortunate that there was a paediatric surgeon in the city I was in, who was able to operate safely". Some of the children she saw there had life-altering disabilities and "many of them were from lower socioeconomic backgrounds—they were working as children", she recalls. "It just made a huge impression on me, the health disparities at that age, and I thought, 'OK, I'm going to become a surgeon.'" Dhatt jokes that she never did become a surgeon, but, she says, "I did become a doctor."

Dhatt studied medicine at Temple University's School of Medicine in Philadelphia, PA, USA, and trained in internal medicine, with a focus on international health, at Case Western Reserve University in Cleveland, OH. Now aged 36 years, Dhatt provides clinical care as an internist in the Washington, DC, area at a teaching hospital in Georgetown University Medical Center, and at a community hospital. "I decided to support inpatient medicine around COVID-19", she says. "I transitioned from practising outpatient medicine into inpatient hospital care, including covering low-income populations in Washington, DC." Reflecting on some of the impacts of COVID-19, she says: "COVID-19 has hit us all hard but none of this is new...we knew...about health disparities between and within countries caused by inequality and the social determinants of health...in health emergencies, women are expected to deliver front-line services, take personal risk, while men make decisions."

Dhatt wants to see more women as decision makers in health. In 2015, with three co-founders, she began to build Women In Global Health (WGH) as a global movement to achieve gender equality in global health leadership; Dhatt is now WGH's Executive Director. "In WGH our mantra is that global health security rests on women", she says. "We are asking for a new social contract for women in health that recognises and values their contribution...we want gender to be a core part of everybody's work...We need every scientist, and researcher, and policy maker to see it as their agenda." From humble beginnings with, as Dhatt recalls, "four co-founders, without any resources", WGH now has 24 chapters and engages over 35 000 supporters in 90 countries, driven by the team's collective commitment to action, and with diversity, equality, and multidisciplinary at its centre. One of the inspirations for WGH was an online campaign initiated in 2014 by Ilona Kickbusch to bring gender diversity to all-male panels in global health. Kickbusch, founder and chair of the Global Health Centre at the Graduate Institute of International and Development Studies in Geneva, says of Dhatt: "She is fearless and a great health diplomat...I think she has built an extraordinary organisation that now spans the globe."

As WGH began gathering data, the advantages of women decision makers became increasingly clear to Dhatt's team. "More and more evidence is coming in from the health sector that when women are in decision-making roles, they are more likely to prioritise social investments such as education, health care, social protections versus classic infrastructure...there is a difference in how women invest and how they determine what to use their political capital for", Dhatt explains. She also highlights the importance of "the triple gender dividend", explaining: "when we invest in gender and health together, we know that there will be a far greater human capital return on investment. Estimates from the World Bank show that when we operate in gender unequal societies, where women are paid less, women are not getting as many educational opportunities, or they are not part of the formal sector, we are losing almost US\$160 trillion annually. We know that when we invest in women, and we invest in women in the health workforce, it leads to a health dividend because jobs get filled and that's essential to achieving universal health coverage. There's an estimated 18 million health worker shortage just in LMI countries, and the majority of those health workers and social workers are going to be women—so to achieve our health agenda we need to invest in women."

To Senait Fisseha, Adjunct Professor of Obstetrics and Gynecology at the University of Michigan Medical School and Director of Global Programs at the Buffett Foundation, Dhatt's vision for gender parity in global health leadership is very much needed. "In a field dominated by white men, and where Global North based and led organisations too often lead presumptuous efforts to design interventions, Roopa is a true champion for 'nothing about us without us'", says Fisseha. "To see a young woman of colour take the reins and push necessary conversations—and actual policy shifts—has been inspiring. There are appropriately ruffled feathers, and many positive ripple effects. She is also supporting others to lead the charge as well, which I really commend her on." For Dhatt, the movement towards transformative change is something that must be owned by everyone. "Everyone has the power to create gender-equitable environments, and that begins with every committee, every group, every opportunity that you have control over designing, or are part of designing...I think for us it really goes back to the fact that we are just not going to achieve our global health goals without gender equality."

Seven things organisations should be doing to combat gender prejudice

This article is taken from the reference quoted just below, but with the word "racism" replaced by "gender prejudice" and "racial" replaced by "gender".

The way the article makes sense on its new topic, illustrates the common themes that run through many areas of prejudice or disability.

Similarly, this article could be modified to refer to disability prejudice.

PERSPECTIVES|THE PENUMBRA| VOLUME 396, ISSUE 10245, P157, JULY 18, 2020

Original paper by Esther Choo in The Lancet.

Published: July 18, 2020 DOI: [https://doi.org/10.1016/S0140-6736\(20\)31565-8](https://doi.org/10.1016/S0140-6736(20)31565-8)

In the USA, the gender disparities in COVID-19 health outcomes collided with national conversations about gender prejudice sparked by the police killing of George Floyd. These events stimulated many organisations, including health-care institutions, to scramble to vocalise their stances on gender equity. The coming years will show if these statements translate into fundamental, lasting change. There are seven actions I hope to see from health-care organisations committed to addressing structural gender prejudice and building equitable environments.

First, organisations need to articulate specific, bold, meaningful goals that relate to actions and change, not stances, feelings, or generalisations. They should acknowledge a starting point and what progress looks like—ie, here are ways in which gender prejudice and gender inequity exist within our walls; here is what we must accomplish; and here are the steps to ensure we get there. Goals should have specificity, timelines, and ownership. They should be endpoints, not processes. Language should be clear—the goal is to address gender prejudice, not merely “culture” or “respect”.

Second, in creating goals, organisations should aim high. While efforts to advance equity must be feasible and sustainable, our default slow, “don’t rock the boat” approach has achieved the current state of devastating inequity. Incremental improvements in representation, whereby expectations for “diverse” faculty begins and ends with their arrival, could, for example, be put aside for creating cultures in which all individuals can expect to thrive. Intermediate goals such as diversity are better thought of as natural by-products of higher-level efforts.

Third, goals must be linked to metrics. Organisations need to define target outcomes that accurately represent accomplishment of goals and rigorously measure them over time. Data should be both quantitative and qualitative to track progress and capture the lived experiences of health-care workers and patients. A data-driven approach will allow organisations to be systematic in their path to equity.

Fourth, organisations need to contribute to the knowledge base. Even with the best of intentions, all organisations will struggle to succeed in abolishing gender prejudice without an industry-wide investment in formal examination of anti-gender prejudice efforts. Research should not focus on gathering further evidence of already well documented inequities but should push to finding effective interventions. However, organisations need not wait for evidence to begin the process of change; rather, they should initiate theoretically based organisational innovations, and study them to inform future efforts.

Fifth, organisations must be thorough in scrubbing out inequity from every place, process, and practice. Gender prejudice is in the very physical environment of health-care settings—in portraiture, artwork, textbooks and learning modules, and equipment such as resuscitation manikins. It is present in clinical processes, including race-based diagnostic and treatment algorithms. It is signalled through decision-making processes, resource allocation, awarding of honours, and types of, and participation in, social gatherings. Gender prejudice is cross-cutting and penetrates all organisational endeavours, so the response to it must be as well.

Sixth, organisations should transform the workforce, including leadership. Gender equity in the workforce is both a mediator and a moderator of health equity. A flourishing diverse workforce provides health benefits to a diverse patient population and strengthens the equity orientation of the entire organisation. Failing to bring equity to positions of power reflects hypocrisy and insincerity and will inhibit sustained anti-racist work. Institutions need to create succession plans; resist dynastic or otherwise biased accelerators of advancement; transform recruitment and selection processes; and place term limits on leadership roles so that there is opportunity for turnover.

Finally, organisations must invest heavily in dismantling gender prejudice. Equity efforts require strong, high-level, and sustained financial investment. Investments should be long term and include a sufficient number of positions, funding to mitigate cultural taxation imposed on minoritised employees and volunteers, and evaluation, education, and training programmes. A substantial portion of the investment should be to pipeline programmes to facilitate workforce and leadership goals.

The COVID-19 pandemic has made it clear that addressing our gender prejudiced societies and structures is a matter of life and death. We need to get real about reversing course on gender prejudice, and doing so will require concrete and focused action, commitment, discipline, ambition, boldness, and money.



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(Seven things organisations should be doing to combat racism - - - original article)

Esther Choo

This is the original article about racism, that was changed to be about gender prejudice. The way that one article about prejudice can be so readily changed to be on a very different topic, shows that all prejudices have very similar underlying issues about human behaviour. Issues around racism are in general better developed than on many other topics of prejudice. We can learn a lot, by doing such a conversion.....

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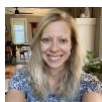
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“Decolonization” in Global Health: A Letter to My White Colleagues (Part 1)



[Heather Buesseler](#)

Sep 28, 2021

<https://aninjusticemag.com/decolonization-in-global-health-a-letter-to-my-white-colleagues-part-i-d26f3f90d0c6>

6 min read

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Part 1: Racism is persistent and pervasive in our field



Image by Anoushka Khandwala, courtesy of AIGA Eye on Design

Dear White global health friends,

“Decolonization.” Next to COVID, it is probably the hottest topic you’re seeing pop up in your global health circles — listed topics, journal articles, webinars, and water cooler conversations.

Can I tell you what’s really bugging me about this? It seems to me that “decolonization” is just a White-washed euphemism for the thing that none of us are actually comfortable confronting in global health: racism.

First, I think it’s important to localize myself in this conversation:

I am among the 70% of women who comprise the [global health workforce](#). My story starts in a small, lily White town in rural Minnesota where dairy cows far outnumber BIPOC folx. I grew up middle-class in a traditional nuclear family whose college-educated parents are still together. My private liberal arts college education landed me a job at a prominent global health NGO right after graduation, and I later attended one of the top public health graduate programs in the nation. I’ve done well in my career, now consulting after nearly 20 years as a public health practitioner, researcher, and adjunct instructor. I live comfortably in a reasonably diverse, safe suburb outside Minneapolis. I am a cisgender, heterosexual homeowner. And I live in a White body.

Privilege? Yeah, I’m keenly aware.

Similar to many, George Floyd’s death shook me awake from my silent, White complacency on issues of race. I found myself newly engaged in conversations with my South Minneapolis neighbors about what it means to be an ally (at the time, I lived one mile from where Floyd was murdered). I inquired with other parents about what it means to raise racially conscious kids. And I contemplated what it means in the context of my professional discipline: global health.

Giving ourselves a pass on racism

My sense is that we White [folx](#) in global health (myself included) tend to give ourselves a pass on racism. We are clearly. not. racist. given our choice to dedicate our careers — nay, our lives — to decreasing rates of infectious disease, reducing maternal and child mortality, improving medical supply chains, and strengthening health system functioning for (Black and Brown) people in developing nations. We collaborate with colleagues all over the world whose racial/ethnic identities, religions, and lived experiences are vastly different than our own — we can't possibly be racist!

As I reflected on the field of my chosen profession, the more I considered: I feel called to work in global health out of a deep sense of compassion — to relieve inequitably distributed suffering and to promote well-being in the world. But what if global health systems and structures are doing more to help me (and others in White bodies) advance professionally than they are to actually relieve suffering and improve health in the world?

Is our very presence in this industry perpetuating the White supremacy upon which it is built? Is the privilege we enjoy as White people working in this field continuing to perpetuate global health inequities?

How often have I — or we, in the global health field — trivialized local knowledge and steamrolled ahead with our White notions of what “they” need, either because we don't ask or don't have the patience to understand? If we did have the time or humility to understand, incorporate, and amplify the perspective and ideas of those we serve, would it deny “us” (Whites) the opportunity to be saviors?

For many of us (myself included) in global health, our identities are so wrapped up in our profession. It is not just a job, it is WHO WE ARE. Are we not, then, building our identities around and earning our living on Black and Brown bodies?

Is our very presence in this industry perpetuating the White supremacy upon which it is built? Is the privilege we enjoy as White people working in this field continuing to perpetuate global health inequities?

Let me check in with you for a moment... How is this letter making you feel so far? Uncomfortable? A bit resentful? Yeah... I get it. We worked hard for that MPH. We've traveled endlessly and worked until we're numb to the bone, missing birthdays and weddings, class reunions, and Christmases to serve the less fortunate.

*Our over-identification with our work, the sacrifices we've made... it's nearly impossible to *not* get defensive when confronted with the idea that we personally benefit from an industry founded on racist principles.*

Feeling guilty? Me too. Oh, the guilt. It paralyzes me sometimes. As a White person in global health, where is it appropriate to apply our education, experience, and compassionate motivation when doing so may further ossify the sector's skeleton of structural racism?

*I encourage you to **sit with what you're feeling**. (Having a hard time identifying that emotion? I love this [emotion wheel](#).) Where are you feeling that emotion in your body? Locate it. Write it down.*

Once we identify and locate our emotional response, we are in a much more receptive space to listen. Take three deep belly breaths. (No really — do it. I promise you'll feel better.)

Now let's continue the conversation.

Examining global health structures

Humor me, for a moment, by answering a series of questions about the global health field:

1. Where are the majority of global health training institutions located?
2. What are the predominant racial identities of global health professors?
3. What are the racial identities of the presidents/CEOs of the majority of global health NGOs?
4. What percentage of leadership positions in global health are held by women? Women of color?
5. Where are the majority of global health donor institutions located?
6. What are the racial identities of decision-makers at global health donor institutions who identify the health issues they will fund (and where do they sit geographically)?
7. Who is involved in designing the (largely prescriptive) requests-for-proposals to which global health NGOs apply?
8. Where are the headquarters locations of the NGOs that receive global health funding?
9. Where are the programs located for which global health funding is ultimately used?

10. How much do Black and Brown professionals in the Global South get paid compared to White professionals in the Global North with similar degrees and experience?

Maybe you Googled the answers to these questions, but I'm guessing you didn't need to. The "White gaze" through which global health is taught, constructed, and implemented is clear. And I'm concerned that "decolonization" is being conceived, designed, and carried out within these same power structures and systems — with White at the center.

We need to ask ourselves: Who is decolonizing for?

We need to ask ourselves: Who is decolonizing for? Is this endeavor truly about dismantling inequitable power structures and deconstructing colonial thinking in global health? Or is it another exercise to make us White folx feel better about ourselves and this massive industry that really *doesn't* aim to "work ourselves out of a job"?

Doing the work

I am not questioning your purpose in global health to improve [health for all](#). I believe in the sincerity of our intentions as White folx to use our privilege to right the balance of justice and equity in the world. But it's no longer good enough to be passively "not racist" in this field.

Equity and justice means listening — deeply and humbly — lest decolonization becomes just another White ego-stroking exercise reflective of colonial power dynamics. This is not just about "meaningfully engaging" people from the Global South. It means re-centering power and decision-making roles so that Black and Brown people from the Global South are the ones defining the agenda and designing the seating arrangements at the table.

Decolonization needs to start within each one of us — especially us White folx in the sector—by doing the deep work of [anti-racism](#).

And that begins with acknowledging that race and racism are persistent and pervasive in global health.

Stay tuned for [Part II](#) & Part III of this letter...

N.B. As a White person in this sector, I have been intentionally seeking out more thoughts on decolonization from persons of color. I encourage you to do the same.

Here are a few to get you started:

Abimbola, S. & Pai, M. [Will global health survive its decolonisation?](#) The Lancet, 21 Nov 2020.

Bruce-Raeburn, A. [Opinion: International development has a race problem](#). DevEx, 17 May 2019.

Kumar, A. [White supremacy in global health](#). Think Global Health, 18 June 2020.

Mogaka, O.F. [Why and for whom are we decolonising global health?](#) The Lancet Global Health, 01 Oct 2021.

Ogundele, S. [Global inequities intensify debate on decolonizing health care](#). HealthyDebate, 26 May 2021.

“Decolonization” in Global Health: A Letter to My White Colleagues (Part 2)

Part 2: How White has been elevated

<https://aninjusticemag.com/decolonization-in-global-health-a-letter-to-my-white-colleagues-part-ii-97bb850a6a4b>



Photo from the 2018 Women Leaders in Global Health Conference, held at the London School of Hygiene & Tropical Medicine.

Dear White global health friends,

Thank you for coming back. If you're here, it's because my [first letter](#) piqued your curiosity or because you agree with its basic tenet: *race and racism are persistent and pervasive in global health.*

To fully understand this, we need to identify and acknowledge the White supremacist foundations upon which global health is built. If we're talking about "DE-colonization," we need to (re)learn the colonial history of our discipline.

White supremacy: The colonial catalyst

The history of racism in global health begins even prior to colonialism. Let's go back to 16th century Europe. The working class toiled the land, their skin browning under the sun, while wealthy aristocrats leisured indoors or under parasols. "Whiteness" [became](#) associated with beauty, civility, and virtuousness.

Propaganda in books, pamphlets, cartoons, and speeches codified and perpetuated White supremacist ideology during the 17th, 18th, and early 19th centuries. Authors like Edward Long (1734–1813) were highly [influential](#) in disseminating racialized ideas of Africans. (Nevermind that he never set foot on the continent — apparently his experience as a slave owner living in Jamaica gave him an adequate authority on the topic.) He claimed that Africans and African societies were so "barbaric" and "chaotic" that they were **better off as slaves** since slavery saved them from worse fates. And although he had no scientific training, the public widely accepted Long's denouncements of Africans as inferior, backward, and **possibly not even human** as rigorous and scientific.

If we're talking about "DE-colonization," we need to (re)learn the colonial history of our discipline.

Seventy-five years later, American physician [J. C. Nott](#) (1804–1873) gained international reputation for his biological concepts of racial difference. He asserted that Blacks and Whites could not possibly belong to the same species,

claiming that Blacks had smaller cranium so they were of lesser intelligence and that their nervous system less developed so they could endure more pain (e.g., whipping by their masters).

Nott claimed, “The negro achieves his greatest perfection, physical and moral, and also greatest longevity, in a state of slavery.” The book sold out of its first printing in four months— and the U.S. Secretaries of State for the Treasury, Navy, and State Departments each purchased a departmental copy.

Adding to this White supremacist “science” were publications of 18th and 19th century European explorers in Africa (Sir Richard Burton, John Hanning Speke, David Livingstone, Henry Morton Stanley, etc.). They wrote about the unfamiliar people and practices they encountered as “lesser” and “savage” — a “[dark continent](#)” filled with danger and disease; dehumanizing descriptions of Africans’ physical features; and tales of violent encounters with “natives.”

By the mid-19th century, the general public widely accepted this racist vitriol. As Europeans vied for increasing global political power, leaders used the “[three C’s](#)” as justification for their imperial expansion: civilization, Christianity, and commerce.

1. **Civilization:** Let’s save these “backwards” (ahem, non-White) people from their own barbarism! We can offer them our superior morals, our modernity, our intellect, our political systems!
2. **Christianity:** The light of Heaven shines upon us, and we must rid these “savages” of their witchcraft and heathenism!
3. **Commerce:** Natural resources? Oh, you mean those over there?? But now that you mention it, we do have that industrial revolution and these imperialist endeavors to fund...

Global health: A brief history

The birth of tropical medicine

In 1884, the [Berlin Conference](#) marked the official beginning of colonialism in Africa. European colonizers were concerned about protecting themselves from the health hazards of tropical diseases (*but do you think they worried about the potential diseases they might transmit to their colonial subjects?*). And so, driven primarily by colonial security interests, the field of “tropical medicine” and an international regime of infectious disease control was born.

As tropical medicine was expanding, many religious organizations sent missionaries to European colonies and began offering clinical services. Health care was one of the means to accomplish the goal of “civilizing” native populations, introducing Western culture, and displacing traditional knowledge and healers.

This was global health in its infancy.

Centering White “expertise”

The field of global health continued to crystallize in Europe and the United States. The first-ever global health conference — the International Sanitary Convention in 1851 — was comprised of physicians and diplomats from 12 European governments. In 1907, Paris became home to the the first global epidemiological data station (Bureau International d’Hygiene Publique). And throughout the first half of the 20th century, the Rockefeller Foundation funded the construction of public health schools in North America and Europe.

Present day global health doesn’t really look so different. International conferences continue to be dominated by White, Western panelists and participants. Global health funders, data analysis, and decision-making are centralized in Europe and the United States — as are the premier training institutions. (We all know the [London School of Hygiene and Tropical](#)

[Medicine](#) — still one of the premier public health training institutions in the world — its name still a colonial hangover.)

Why do we continue to prioritize White comfort and experiences, instead of locating the centers of knowledge and power in the Global South where the work is being done?

Post-colonial policy

The Second World War catalyzed political freedom and independence for European colonial interests. From 1945 to 1960, three dozen states in Africa and Asia achieved autonomy from their European rulers. Then the Cold War set in, and the United States became concerned that all these new countries might ally themselves with the Soviet communist bloc. The solution? Offer [aid packages](#) and technical assistance to the newly independent nations to help them prosper under capitalism and align with the West.

But these new (non-White) nations with developing economies faced internal problems as a result of their colonial past. And as sustainable democratic governance struggled to gain traction, these nations incurred deep debts to their former colonizers.

Obviously, newly independent, poor (Black and Brown) nations wouldn't know the first thing about growing their new economies, right? So in the 1980s, White-led international financial institutions developed an enlightened pathway to long-term economic growth: [structural adjustment programmes](#) (SAPs).

White Western heroes to the rescue again!

But in order to adhere to the conditions of the SAPs, borrowing nations were forced into austerity measures, which meant capping funding for social programs like education and health. The result? Chronically underfunded public health systems, dilapidated health infrastructure, inadequate numbers of health personnel, and demoralizing working conditions that have fueled “brain drain” in the health sector. Maternal and child mortality increased, and infectious diseases, like HIV and tuberculosis, proliferated.

But White experts know best, right?

A moral imperative

First came the civilization mission. From which the discipline of tropical medicine emerged. Which centered White global health expertise.

Independence from colonialism gave rise to neo-colonial political and economic policy. Which decimated the health and social structures of the new nations.

But instead of finding humility and admitting our failures, us White folx charged forth with the same arrogance that created this mess. We still see ourselves as the hero, plunging into the depths of the unknown to save (non-White) people from themselves. Now Europe and America embraced a **moral imperative** to address the public health issues that ravaged these nations (with backdoor objectives of Western political security and financial interests).

Decolonization requires a culture of discussing race in our organizations, which is rare and often uncomfortable

In the 1990s and 2000s, global health funding ballooned. Bilateral funding from rich countries, such as USAID (U.S.) and UKaid (UK), grew. The United States is now the largest donor to global health in the world. Congress, an institution that is [77% White](#), allocates the foreign assistance budgets. In

essence, a majority White body politic with little understanding, much less lived experience in the nations for which this funding is intended, largely dictates the health fates of Black and Brown individuals in lower and middle income countries.

What's more, these White nations need the people benefiting from its aid to know to whom they should feel indebted. Stringent "[branding guidelines](#)" insist that every water well, sack of sorghum, training manual, and program t-shirt are stamped with its tagline: "From the American people." (So as not to be outdone, the United Kingdom later copied this effort — "From the British people.")



USAID's logo, emblazoned with the patronizing tagline, "From the American people."

Numbers of international NGOs surged. New governance structures and funding mechanisms were created — The Global Fund; PEPFAR; Gavi, the Vaccine Alliance; Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation; and Grand Challenges Canada, just to name a few. (Structures and funding that are primarily led by White people and headquartered in Europe and the United States.) And now global health is a complex, [fragmented](#) landscape that requires acronym dictionaries, gamer guides, and decoder rings to get anything done.

White people vs. White supremacist systems

Okay, it's *really* hard to write a *brief* history of global health. And even as such, I recognize that what I have outlined is cursory, at best.

The story I am trying to illuminate is one that establishes the ways in which global health has emerged from a history of racism and continues to embody a White-dominated power structure.

This is not about **you**, my White global health colleague. Please don't take this personally.

But we must recognize that our discipline has developed around and continues to center White knowledge and expertise. The White body politic of global health insidiously implies that Black and Brown knowledge, systems, and structures just aren't good enough.

Why do we continue to prioritize White comfort and experiences, instead of locating the centers of knowledge and power in the Global South where the work is being done? We need to acknowledge this structure continues to oppress those we purportedly aim to help.

Global health *has* [improved](#) over the past half century, by many objective metrics: life expectancy has increased, smallpox was eradicated, maternal and child mortality have fallen, global hunger is abating. Despite these gains, the multi-dimensional labyrinth of a global health "system" requires that the White folx who created it continue to participate in it to keep it running. Or it asks that we piggyback new efforts on the failures of our previous ones — including our newest endeavor: "decolonization."

If decolonization is to succeed, White folx cannot be the ones leading it. We need to step back and re-center power and decision-making so Black and Brown people from the Global South are the ones defining the agenda and designing the seating arrangements at the game table.

Let me check in with you again... How does it make you feel to think about stepping backwards or sideways to let others lead? Scared? Lost? Me too.

What does this mean for careers to which we've dedicated our entire lives? How do we conceive of a career trajectory if we can't see ourselves at the top levels of leadership or innovation? How do we reconcile what we feel called to do with who is best placed to lead the work in our field?

Where else might we fit into this field if not in our current role? How can we continue to support the goals of global health if we are not leading them? This is, after all, central to our identity. It's WHO WE ARE.

The challenge with “decolonizing” is that it directly challenges our identities and our purpose. It forces us White folx to reckon with the trauma our institutions, predecessors, and contemporaries have caused *and continue to cause* (from [sexual abuse scandals](#) to [displacing public services](#)) because Whites hold the power in our industry. And decolonization requires a culture of discussing race in our organizations, which is rare and often uncomfortable.

But perhaps the most difficult thing of all is that decolonization is NOT ABOUT US. Yes, we have to sit with our identity-grappling, guilt and shame processing, and reorienting our professional purpose. But focusing on it continues to center and elevate White experiences.

White, Western folx, frameworks, and institutions need to check our ego at the door and finally *listen to* and *center* the narratives and expertise of Black and Brown individuals, communities, and institutions. They are the experts of their lived experiences. We need to learn some humility and let that expertise lead our field.

This is not to say that White folx have nothing to contribute to this field. But the power dynamics, politics, and governance of global health needs transformation.

How do we get there? Stay tuned for *Part III: Crafting interest convergence*.

In case you missed it, here is Part I of this letter: Racism is persistent and pervasive in our field

Here are some links to Black and Brown voices on decolonizing global health. If you made it this far reading my thoughts, do yourself a favor and read theirs. Atim, C. [Opinion: 5 ways to decolonize global health and build greater equity](#). Devex, 09 July 2021. Khan, M., et al. [Decolonising global health in 2021: a roadmap to move from rhetoric to reform](#). BMJ Global Health, Vol 6(3), 2021. Kumar, A. [White supremacy in global health](#). Think Global Health, 18 June 2020. Mogaka, O.F. [Why and for whom are we decolonising global health?](#) The Lancet Global Health, 01 Oct 2021.

Invisibility

A more real word for invisibility is "ignored" or "in hiding".

Social invisibility

From Wikipedia, the free encyclopedia

Social invisibility refers to a group of people in the society who have been separated or systematically ignored by the majority of the public. As a result, those who are marginalized feel neglected or being invisible in the society. It can include elderly homes, child orphanages, homeless people or anyone who experiences a sense of ignored or separated from society as a whole.^{[1][2][3][4]}

Psychological consequences

The subjective experience of being unseen by others in a social environment is social invisibility. A sense of disconnectedness from the surrounding world is often experienced by invisible people. This disconnectedness can lead to absorbed coping and breakdowns, based on the asymmetrical relationship between someone made invisible and others.^[5]

Among [African American](#) men, invisibility can often take the form of a psychological process which both deals with the stress of racialized invisibility, and the choices made in becoming visible within a social framework that predetermines these choices. In order to become visible and gain acceptance, an African American man has to avoid adopting behavior that made him invisible in the first place, which intensifies the stress already brought on through racism.

Social exclusion

From Wikipedia, the free encyclopedia

Social exclusion or **social marginalisation** is the social disadvantage and relegation to the fringe of [society](#). It is a term used widely in [Europe](#) and was first used in [France](#).^[1] It is used across disciplines including [education](#), [sociology](#), [psychology](#), [politics](#) and [economics](#).^[2]

Social exclusion is the process in which individuals are blocked from (or denied full access to) various rights, opportunities and resources that are normally available to members of a different group, and which are fundamental to social integration and observance of human rights within that particular group^[3] (e.g., housing, employment, healthcare, civic engagement, democratic participation, and [due process](#)).

Alienation or disenfranchisement resulting from social exclusion can be connected to a person's social class, race, skin color, religious affiliation, ethnic origin, educational status, childhood relationships,^[4] living standards, and or political opinions, and appearance. Such exclusionary forms of discrimination may also apply to people with a disability, minorities, LGBTQ+ people, drug users,^[5] institutional care leavers,^[6] the elderly and the young. Anyone who appears to deviate in any way from perceived norms of a population may thereby become subject to coarse or subtle forms of social exclusion.

The outcome of social exclusion is that affected individuals or communities are prevented from participating fully in the economic, social, and political life of the society in which they live.^[7] This may result in resistance in the form of demonstrations, protests or lobbying from the excluded people.^[8]

The concept of social exclusion has led to the researcher's conclusion that in many European countries the impact of social disadvantages, that influence the well-being of all people, including with special needs, has an increasingly negative impact.^[9]

These ideas are discussed in more detail in the chapter on Psychological Safety.

People may voluntarily **choose** to be invisible, or at least for some of their characteristics, such as disability or identity. Or societal pressures and prejudices may be so powerful and cruel, that they are **forced** to live in stealth, or keeping some aspects of their life invisible to those around them.

This fear of harsh consequences, forces censorship of what they can say. Many possible topics of conversation would disclose their secret identity. As topics of conversation move unpredictably, a conversation that started safe, may suddenly become dangerous to the person living in stealth. This leads to extreme caution and care in conversations and diminishes the quality of their human relationships and threatens their mental health.

This fear of consequences censors what they can say, in a way that breaches their "right" to freedom of expression. In reality, where rights cannot be used, then the right doesn't really exist for these people, it is just marks on a piece of paper. Expression includes tone of voice, mannerisms, the clothes that you choose to wear, the people that you are seen with.....

It is often difficult to impossible for members of the dominant group in society, to acknowledge that their behaviour had these consequences for marginalised people. The consequences for the marginalised person come from the actions of many people put together, so that people who oppress often don't have to face the consequences for their behaviour. The Pope says a few things and these comments influence other people to act out the prejudice. This hate speech cannot presently be prosecuted, as the Pope is in a different country and is protected by diplomatic privilege.

Feeling safe means being confident that threats made by various other people will not come to pass. This sounds easy to members of the privileged groups, but actually can take several years, as counsellors can tell you. Trauma often has a slow recovery process. Although we try to tell our children that "sticks and stones can break our bones, but names will never hurt us", this is usually quite untrue. An excellent book on trauma recovery is Bessel van der Kolk's The Body Keeps the Score.

Going stealth means accepting a loss of power. The person cannot complain about transgressions of their identity or issue which drove them to go stealth, as this would disclose the identity or issue that they wish to keep secret. This makes it harder for the deaf person to ask you to speak louder, or the dyslexic to ask for further help. The trans-person cannot access mental health help, without disclosing their identity. This helps drive the high suicide rate.

Women often feel obligated to accept a silent supporting role. We may face consequences for not being silent, it can be seen as not being "a good woman". This conflicts speaking out.

Invisibility: The Power of an Idea - Social World | The New School

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=eeLprzcaT10&t=1s>

Stealth? Keeping the Secrets of Mental Illness

By wearing my problems on my sleeve, keeping them out in the open, I've taken away most of their power.

March 26, 2019 by [Jeff Cann](#) [Leave a Comment](#)

<https://goodmenproject.com/featured-content/stealth-keeping-the-secrets-of-mental-illness/>



*In a town this size, there's no place to hide
Everywhere you go you meet someone you know*

— John Prine

The whole setup seems sketchy. It's the only place I know in town with its principal entrance in an alley. You park out of sight from the street – nestled in the midst of single-story warehouses and a low-income apartment building. It feels like a great big secret. And I suppose it is. MacGregor Behavioral Health – this is where my therapist practices.

This is where I go to talk about anxiety and OCD.

I spent most of my adult life living in Washington, DC. Unless you've lived in a small town, it's hard to comprehend how invisible you are in a city. Surrounded by a million people, the odds of running into someone you know anywhere outside of your neighborhood is mathematically unlikely. Sure you cross paths with the same people time and again – on your commute, or at the gym, at the place you buy your lunch – but these are people you only know from this context. When you run into a person from the lunch-counter at your gym, you both smile and say *small world*.

When I moved to Gettysburg, the first person I met was the children's room librarian. I was reading a story to Sophie when Andrea came up and introduced herself. Obviously a bookish adult, I was someone she thought she should meet.

The next day, while walking to the post office, I crossed paths with Andrea in a park. And that's how it is here. There are thirty-thousand people living Gettysburg and its *suburbs*. Therefore, I see the same people all over town several times a week. I learned almost immediately that when another driver is being annoying, don't honk the horn. The chances are high that it's my kid's teacher.

The waiting room at MacGregor's is small and stark. Only three therapists work there. I'm often alone while awaiting my appointment, but more likely, another person will be there at the same time. There's almost nothing to look at in the waiting room, except two paintings on opposite walls of the room.

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One is clearly a rip-off of Whistler's Mother – a sepia-toned painting of an aging woman's profile. Everything about the painting is identical to the Whistler masterpiece, except the skill with which it was created. The overriding feeling of the MacGregor version is alone-ness. A woman approaching the end of her life – facing her short future or reminiscing her long past. Any life-long friendships are over, now existing only in her head.

On the opposing wall is the contrasting painting – reminiscent of nothing. Three toga-clad Greek teens lounge on castle-balcony happily listening to an Aristotle-like friend expound on philosophy or logic. These youths are immersed in friendship and discussion. Lazily passing their day, in no hurry to dive into the lives that await them.

Both paintings are hung fourteen inches too high. It takes effort to look up that far, so the people in the waiting room look at each other... or at their phones. I don't have a phone, so I look at the other patients.

For a guy with social anxiety, I know a surprising number of people. I run financial operations at the only community center in town – it's one of the main social hubs where people congregate. We have thousands of fitness members and hundreds of daycare families, and at some point, I interact with most of them. Plus, my kids are three grades apart, so I know two sets of school parents. I volunteer for a fitness-oriented non-profit, and I'm active with the local running community. *Not* knowing the other person in MacGregor's waiting room seems unlikely. But I'm also terrible with faces. I know when I've met someone before, but I rarely remember where we met or who they are. When I share the waiting room with another person, I just keep my mouth shut.

I'm sure the other patients appreciate this.

One-fifth of adult Americans are diagnosed with a mental illness. And we all know plenty of people who have never been diagnosed. *Head-cases* we called them when I was a teen – unreasonably sad or stressed or jumpy or awkward.

And then there are the people who can't keep a job; who drink too much; who use drugs; are overly bombastic or excessively timid. Most of us could benefit from talk therapy. We all need some space to honestly analyze our thoughts and actions, a time to get to the root of our motivations. Cost is an obvious barrier, but looming larger is the stigma of seeing a psychologist or a therapist. This makes the whole topic *unconsiderable*; what if someone found out.

Some illnesses we just don't talk about. It used to be cancer, now it is HIV/AIDS. And it's always been mental illness. The mentally ill are fearful of judgment or being seen as weak. People might make fun, they might gossip. Because people are generally ignorant, I worry that they'll assume the worst. I'll be branded as dangerous, unstable, incapable, or unworthy. I'll lose my job, my friends, my stature. The guy sitting across from me in a meeting will know he's better than me – he's heard I'm *nuts*.

Like everyone else with mental illness, I kept mine a secret for years. I snuck into MacGregor's hidden waiting room each week and sat there without a phone – trying to figure out what subliminal message the therapists were sending with their odd paintings. I sat there hoping no one I knew came in and “caught” me. A note on my door at work stating the generic “Doctor's appointment.” I talked about my problems with my therapist and then shut them in a drawer, out of sight from me and everyone else until my next appointment.

A little more than a year ago, I gave up on stealth. I decided that it was healthier for me to tell everyone about my anxiety and OCD, my Tourette's Syndrome, and my past alcohol abuse. Keeping it a secret was a pain in the ass. I felt disingenuous, like a fraud. By hiding it away, I never had a chance to address these issues in my day-to-day life, just in my fifty-minute therapy session. I'm sure everyone saw me as that head-case anyway. I involuntarily roll my eyes and make noises. I grind my teeth. At times, I'm unreasonably reclusive. I'm moody and weird – now, at least, people know why.

I once asked one of the therapists at MacGregor's what they were trying to achieve with those paintings. They are too strange, too opposite to be randomly selected. She said she didn't know, probably nothing. She didn't pick them out and had never even thought about them. But she also never sat in the waiting room all alone trying to sort out her problems either.

I don't believe in coincidence. Those paintings were selected *because* they are so different, even if the buyer didn't realize it. I'd like to say that over the past eighteen months, my mental health has improved, but I know this is untrue. I still have all the same problems I had before – sometimes they're worse, sometimes they're better, but they don't go away. But the thing that's improved is my comfort with those problems.

By wearing them on my sleeve, keeping them out in the open, I've taken away most of their power. I know this is verboten, something not done in polite company. Much like discussing cancer several decades ago.

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In my house, when we watch a nature show on PBS, and a cute, innocent animal gets mauled by a predator, we always say something along the lines of “Good for the lion, not so good for the gazelle.” This is my mantra for dealing with my mental health. If my openness leaves those around me feel uncomfortable, well, at least it's good for me.

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Originally published on [The Other Stuff](#)

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The Good Men Project is different from most media companies. We are a “participatory media company”—which means we don't just have content you read and share and comment on but it means we have multiple ways you can actively be a part of the conversation. As you become a deeper part of the conversation—*The Conversation No One Else is Having*—you will learn all of the ways we support our Writers' Community—community FB groups, weekly conference calls, classes in writing, editing platform building and How to Create Social Change.



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Stealth is Not Safe

By [alyssa.gonzalez](#)

September 22, 2018

<https://www.intomore.com/you/stealth-is-not-safe/>



A few days ago in Ottawa, an assailant attacked a trans teenager on a train while onlookers cheered. As someone who came to the city in part to escape anti-trans climates elsewhere, this is chilling, but what's more so is the sense from so many people around me that even after this attack I have nothing to fear.

For too many people, the dangers of being trans seem overblown or self-inflicted, even. In their minds, we *could* simply vanish, and be safely invisible even in violently hostile locales, with a good enough imitation of cisgender norms. Some of them even think that my relocation to Canada from the United States was a wildly excessive step and that I could have been safe and happy in my previous home as long as I didn't "announce" my transness with every step. Trans people have a word for this idea: "stealth." And it's anything but safe.

"Stealth," for the uninitiated, refers to pretending one's gender doesn't bear the adjective "trans." It means pretending to be a cis representative of one's gender, to have been recognized as a member thereof for one's entire life, and to have never borne a different name. "Going stealth" means hiding a large chunk of one's past, from childhood photos to prom dates, and papering over the resulting gaps with denial and occasional lies. This was once medically mandated for transgender women, who were expected to leave their hometowns and live somewhere where no one knew their history. Many of us have painful memories of how much obligatory stealth cost us on our way to making our bodies truly ours, and the rest of us know those people. And it doesn't work.

I have been amazingly fortunate in my transition. I began with features on the soft side of masculine and my transition has thereby made me beautiful. I was never tall, so my height is not now unusual for women in my area. I was already curvier than most men my size, thanks to my Hispanic heritage, and my hips are now the envy of many. I have achieved results from hormone replacement therapy comparable to what people much younger than me often achieve. The signs

that betray my journey are subtle and easily missed, more real to me than they are to passers-by. I delight in feminine clothing and have no particular desire to take on the more visible signifiers of queerness that many of my fellow trans women enthusiastically embody, so dressing in the way that makes me feel most *me* doesn't out me. When I dress to accentuate my best features and spend time outdoors in summer, I can see cisgender men taking in the sight without showing any disgust or surprise.

So what's to stop me from pretending it has always been so?

On a practical level, I have a few more steps before it's even hypothetically possible. I need to get my legal documents sorted, an increasingly difficult task as my native USA gets more and more hostile to people like me. Interspersed with that, I have a small number of additional medical procedures in mind. Until then, things as simple as plane tickets or the additional layer it takes to make my bathing suit fit inform onlookers of my history.

Even past such bare necessities, though, no matter how easily I can be mistaken for a cis woman, I'm *not* a cis woman, and I can thereby be detected and targeted. I will always need exogenous estrogen, and making this drug unavailable to transgender women, or harder to acquire in general, hits me even if the ideologues who make those laws never recognize me as a target. The medical care I require and receive will always reflect the fact that I am missing organs that most cis women have. My medical history will always contain a series of medications that are improbably combined for any other reason, even if I eventually stop needing some of them. An enterprising search through my legal documents, perhaps aided by a court order or determined hacker, will show that I once answered to a different name. *This essay* exists and will appear in Internet archives out to the end of human civilization, alongside other detailed discussions on my gender. People like me are fundamentally detectable, and in a hostile environment, our enemies are *looking* for us. I cannot legally evaporate every trace of what I was assigned, and in medical cases, risk bodily peril for so obscuring my own history.

Even this picture is overly rosy. Many of us get found out, not because of our path through time, but because of our path through space. *Especially* in a world where I felt I had to deny this piece of myself in order to survive, I would require the support of the local queer community, but being seen in association with such a community is itself dangerous. I would be spending time among other transgender women and be flagged by association. Deadly raids on trans spaces are the incident that sparked the Gay Pride movement and still occur in some of these places. Even if I keep my honesty confined to online conversations, these generate records that can be accessed to identify me and my associates. Any cue that helps my people recognize me would be seen as a provocation by the enemies we're all hiding from, and a sign that this violence is self-inflicted by those who think that we shouldn't be allowed to be seen. The level of denial and concealment I would have to maintain to make sure that my actual public presence holds no trace of my transness would undo many of the gains I have achieved by transitioning in the first place and make all of my surviving friendships dishonest and distant.

Those cues are subtler than people think and include the very person I've grown into over all these years. Any piece of my personality, demeanor, or behavior that seems off becomes a thing of suspicion, even if it's not the kind of thing that anti-trans ideologues call "male socialization." The dense array of psychological triggers and lines I won't cross become signposts about what I've endured. My determination to not play along with cis women's too-frequent anti-trans jokes lines up with everything else that doesn't fit into a conspiracy that people feel determined to unravel. A life spent protecting myself from an abusive family with careful lies prepared me for this level of deception, but stealth is more than strategic half-truths. To actually hide, I would have to bury all of that under an all-encompassing persona, and slowly cease to know myself at all.

A related issue is that I am not *just* trans. Most of the places where transgender women are persecuted are also violently homophobic. I would continue to face this hazard as a perceived cis lesbian. I would not only have to deny a key formative experience and hope no one follows any of the trails leading to it, but I would have to avoid being around and especially being affectionate with the people I care about most or mark not just myself, but these treasured partners, for violence. Or I could leave all of my relationships behind and live alone in hostile territory, severed from any friend who could possibly understand my situation to protect myself from immediate danger, with no protection from the ongoing psychic violence of that isolation.

In the end, "going stealth" isn't much safer, and is about as impossible, as socially detransitioning and pretending at the maleness I was originally assigned. The main difference is, stealth would not necessarily lead to a swift and total psychological breakdown culminating in my untimely self-induced demise. My stealth decline would be slower, harder, and *far* more disturbing, combining intense loneliness, paranoia, and the perverse horror of enduring all of that while I'm perceived as a woman throughout.

I am a transgender woman, and I need to exist in places where that is a safe thing to be. There are no other options.

Internalised Oppression

People may internalise oppression, in an attempt to gain some control over it. By trying to keep a disability invisible, they are trying to hide it, to avoid the impacts of stigma from other people. But over a period of time, this leads to self image and other mental health problems, due to the stresses of being forced to live a lie.

https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Internalized_oppression

Internalized oppression

From Wikipedia, the free encyclopedia

In [social justice](#) theory, **internalized oppression** is a concept in which an [oppressed](#) group uses the methods of the oppressing group against itself. It occurs when one group perceives an inequality of value relative to another group, and desires to be like the more highly-valued group.

Members of [marginalized](#) groups may have an oppressive view of their own group, or affirm negative [self-stereotypes](#). Internalized oppression may manifest on an individual or group level, and may result in conflict or discrimination within the group.^[1]

It may also exist among [immigrants](#) and their descendants. If the host community devalues a foreigner's [ethnic](#) origin, native language or culture, an immigrant may feel [inferior](#). This can lead to [self-hatred](#), which manifests itself in an exaggerated [conformity](#) to dominant norms. An immigrant may also respond by [assimilating](#) and [acculturating](#).^[2]

Types

[Internalized racism](#) occurs when a member of a group which is a target of racism assumes a racist attitude towards their own group. It indicates a lack of [self-esteem](#).^[3] Internalized racism is an effect of internalized colonialism, in which a colonized people loses its identity and assumes the values of the colonizing society; it may happen gradually, over a long period of time. An example of internalized colonialism is the practice of [skin whitening](#) (see [colorism](#)) found in the Africa and Asia.^[1]

Internalized [homophobia](#), also known as internalized [heterosexism](#), occurs in the [LGBT community](#) when individuals adopt a culture's heterosexual attitudes. It has a positive correlation with psychological distress and a negative correlation with self-esteem.^[3] Internalized homophobia is strongly associated with guilt and shame (especially among youth) and has been linked to increased anxiety, depression and suicide.^[4]

In [internalized sexism](#), individuals (generally women) adopt oppressive attitudes towards their gender which are held by their culture. An example is [slut-shaming](#), where women criticize transgressions of accepted codes of sexual conduct on themselves and other women.^[5]

Causes

Internalized oppression "occurs when a person comes to [internalize](#) oppressive prejudices and biases about the identity group(s) to which he or she belongs".^{[6][7][8][9]} It occurs when "[s]ocial oppression such as racism, sexism, ableism, classism, heterosexism, gender and religious oppression, and anti-Semitism" are "implanted by and [work] toward the benefit of any dominant group."^[6] Internalized oppression "depends on [systemically](#) limiting, blocking, and undermining" the "success, innovation, and power" of oppressed individuals or groups.^[6] Some individuals will copy (and internalize) "institutionalized rejection of difference," failing "to examine the distortions which result from ... misnaming [these differences] and their effects on human behavior and expectations."^[10]

Effects

"If women are surrounded by people who view them as subordinate, incapable, or lacking control over their actions, women are likely to come to understand themselves in a similar way, even if subconsciously."^[11] Internalized oppression fosters the beliefs that the self cannot be [autonomous](#), is unworthy of wielding power, and is little more than an object of sexual gratification (see [sexual objectification](#)).^[11] "Psychological oppression can be damaging to a person's moral relationship with the self ... Since those who have internalized oppressive prejudices often engage in behavior that further perpetuates these biases, internalized oppression is not only a symptom of an oppressive social climate, but it also represents a mechanism for its continued existence".^[11] According to [University of Massachusetts Amherst](#) doctoral students Valerie Joseph and Tanya O. Williams, "Deep racial self-negation[,] ... internalized racial hatred [and] internalized oppression ... stymied [their] growth as people and scholars [and] inhibited [their] ability to be...profound, strong, and beautiful ...".^[6] Individuals can be made to feel "implicated in a project of compliance with the values and goals" of the dominant society.^[6] Internalized oppression may also occur in [disabled](#) individuals, who may distance themselves from others with disabilities to avoid associating themselves with those who may be viewed by society as "weak" or "lazy".^[12] Nabina Liebow wrote, "[People of color](#) who internalize stereotypes regarding [criminality](#) and moral deviance ... can ... view themselves as outlaws in the moral community" and may "engage in behavior that further perpetuates these biases ... Fulfilling these stereotypes further pushes someone outside the moral fold and intensifies one's damaged moral identity ... [I]nternalizing stereotypes about criminality and moral deviance can led to a pervasive feeling of [guilt](#) ... Persistent feelings of guilt can result in [mental-health](#) setbacks such as [depression](#)" and "repeated exposure to guilt and similar feelings has been linked with a range of health challenges such as "dysfunctional coping, abdominal obesity, and glucose intolerance complicit in the development of Type 2 diabetes".^[9]

Manifestations

According to [Audre Lorde](#), manifestations of internalized oppression include voluntary isolation.^[10] She describes the relationship between older members of an oppressed group and younger members of the same group as "contemptible or suspect or excess." [*sic*]^[10] This [generation gap](#) leads to "historical amnesia", with oppressed minorities repeating the learning process and failing to convey knowledge to subsequent generations.^[10] Lorde cites oppressed individuals as "encouraged to pluck out some one aspect of [one]self and present this as the meaningful whole, eclipsing or denying the other parts of the self";^[10] they may hesitate to breach the false stereotypes surrounding them or verbalize resistance to violence.^[10] The most common manifestation is self-hatred.^[10]

Racial manifestations include "multifaceted and extreme psychological, social, and economic self-sabotage"; a tendency to "defer to [whites](#)", and feelings of being "not [black](#) enough".^[6] The self is viewed as a diminished, deviant, criminal and undeserving moral agent.^[9] [Sandra Bartky](#) identified disturbances in [body image](#), [gender expression](#) and power dynamics as manifestations of internalized sexism in women.^[8]

Remedies

According to Audre Lorde, "[T]he master's tools will never dismantle the master's house ... My fullest concentration of energy is available to me only when I integrate all the parts of who I am, openly, allowing power from the particular sources of my living to flow back and forth freely through all my different selves, without the restrictions of externally imposed definition".^[10] "To root out internalized patterns of oppression" women must "recognize differences among women who are our equals, neither inferior nor superior, and devise ways to use each other's difference to enrich our visions and our joint struggles ... to identify and develop new definitions of power and new patterns of relating across difference ... sharpen[ing] self-definition by exposing the self in work and struggle together with those whom we define as different from ourselves, although sharing similar goals".^[10]

To understand and overcome internalized oppression, Joseph and Williams developed a workshop to "introduce and discuss issues of socialization, stereotyping, internalized oppression, and domination." This "social justice education model ... encouraged an agent/target model of leadership" in which representatives of the oppressor and oppressed classes joined together to guide "participants in developing a plan of action to address racism."^[quote citation needed] They recommended that fear "left over about discussing race, racism, and internalized racism" be set aside to "talk forthrightly, honestly, reflectively, and thoughtfully about race", and the "need to voice ... hurt, the need to surface realities, the need to shine light on a history that was and continues to be

ignored" is greater than the fear of discussing the issues.^[6] The internally oppressed must learn how they have been indoctrinated, to "engage in a process of rejecting internalized subordination as an everyday choice".^[6]

Related theories

French philosopher [Michel Foucault](#) "has argued that the rise of parliamentary institutions and of new conceptions of political liberty was accompanied by a darker counter-movement, by the emergence of a new and unprecedented discipline directed against the body. More is required of the body now than mere political allegiance or the approbation of the products of its labor: the new discipline invades the body and seeks to regulate its very forces and operations, the economy and efficiency of its movements ... the production of 'docile bodies' requires that an uninterrupted coercion be directed to the very processes of bodily activity, not just their result; this 'micro-physics of power' fragments and partitions the body's time, its space, and its movements".^[8]

The 18th-century English philosopher [Jeremy Bentham](#)'s [Panopticon](#) is a theoretical model of Foucault's ideas. Its constant state of surveillance, imposed by an oppressive external force, serves "'to induce in the inmate a state of consciousness and permanent visibility that assures the automatic functioning of power'; each becomes to himself his own jailer".^[8]

See also

- [Learned helplessness](#)
- [Passing \(racial identity\)](#)

The risks of social isolation

Psychologists are studying how to combat loneliness in those most at risk, such as older adults

By Amy Novotney

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According to a [2018 national survey by Cigna](#), loneliness levels have reached an all-time high, with nearly half of 20,000 U.S. adults reporting they sometimes or always feel alone. Forty percent of survey participants also reported they sometimes or always feel that their relationships are not meaningful and that they feel isolated.

Such numbers are alarming because of the health and mental health risks associated with loneliness. According to a meta-analysis co-authored by Julianne Holt-Lunstad, PhD, a professor of psychology and neuroscience at Brigham Young University, lack of social connection heightens health risks as much as smoking 15 cigarettes a day or having alcohol use disorder. She's also found that loneliness and social isolation are twice as harmful to physical and mental health as obesity ([Perspectives on Psychological Science, Vol. 10, No. 2, 2015](#)).

"There is robust evidence that social isolation and loneliness significantly increase risk for premature mortality, and the magnitude of the risk exceeds that of many leading health indicators," HoltLunstad says.

In an effort to stem such health risks, campaigns and coalitions to reduce social isolation and loneliness—an individual's perceived level of social isolation—have been

launched in Australia, Denmark and the United Kingdom. These national programs bring together research experts, nonprofit and government agencies, community groups and skilled volunteers to raise awareness of loneliness and address social isolation through evidence-based interventions and advocacy.

But is loneliness really increasing, or is it a condition that humans have always experienced at various times of life? In other words, are we becoming lonelier or just more inclined to recognize and talk about the problem?

These are tough questions to answer because historical data about loneliness are scant. Still, some research suggests that social isolation is increasing, so loneliness may be, too, says Holt-Lunstad. The most recent U.S. census data, for example, show that more than a quarter of the population lives alone—the highest rate ever recorded. In addition, more than half of the population is unmarried, and marriage rates and the number of children per household have declined since the previous census. Rates of [volunteerism have also decreased](#), according to research by the University of Maryland's Do Good Institute, and [an increasing percentage of Americans report no religious affiliation](#)—suggesting declines in the kinds of religious and other institutional connections that can provide community.

"Regardless of whether loneliness is increasing or remaining stable, we have lots of evidence that a significant portion of the population is affected by it," says HoltLunstad. "Being connected to others socially is widely considered a fundamental human need—crucial to both well-being and survival."

As experts in behavior change, psychologists are well-positioned to help the nation combat loneliness. Through their research and public policy work, many psychologists have been providing data and detailed recommendations for advancing social connection as a U.S. public health priority on both the societal and individual levels.

"With an increasing aging population, the effects of loneliness on public health are only anticipated to increase," Holt-Lunstad says. "The challenge we face now is figuring out what can be done about it."

Who is most likely?

Loneliness is an experience that has been around since the beginning of time—and we all deal with it, according to Ami Rokach, PhD, an instructor at York University in Canada and a clinical psychologist. "It's something every single one of us deals with from time to time," he explains, and can occur during life transitions such as the death of a loved one, a divorce or a move to a new place. This kind of loneliness is referred to by researchers as reactive loneliness.

Problems can arise, however, when an experience of loneliness becomes chronic, Rokach notes. "If reactive loneliness is painful, chronic loneliness is torturous," he says. Chronic loneliness is most likely to set in when individuals either don't have the emotional, mental or financial resources to get out and satisfy their social needs or they lack a social circle that can provide these benefits, says psychologist Louise Hawkley, PhD, a senior research scientist at the research organization NORC at the University of Chicago.

"That's when things can become very problematic, and when many of the major negative health consequences of loneliness can set in," she says.

Last year, a [Pew Research Center survey](#) of more than 6,000 U.S. adults linked frequent loneliness to dissatisfaction with one's family, social and community life. About

28 percent of those dissatisfied with their family life feel lonely all or most of the time, compared with just 7 percent of those satisfied with their family life. Satisfaction with one's social life follows a similar pattern: 26 percent of those dissatisfied with their social lives are frequently lonely, compared with just 5 percent of those who are satisfied with their social lives. One in five Americans who say they are not satisfied with the quality of life in their local communities feel frequent loneliness, roughly triple the 7 percent of Americans who are satisfied with the quality of life in their communities. And, of course, loneliness can occur when people are surrounded by others—on the subway, in a classroom, or even with their spouses and children, according to Rokach, who adds that loneliness is not synonymous with chosen isolation or solitude. Rather, loneliness is defined by people's levels of satisfaction with their connectedness, or their perceived social isolation.



Effects of loneliness and isolation

As demonstrated by a review of the effects of perceived social isolation across the life span, co-authored by Hawkey, loneliness can wreak havoc on an individual's physical, mental and cognitive health ([*Philosophical Transactions of the Royal Society B*, Vol. 370, No. 1669, 2015](#)). Hawkey points to evidence linking perceived social isolation with adverse health consequences including depression, poor sleep quality, impaired executive function, accelerated cognitive decline, poor cardiovascular function and impaired immunity at every stage of life. In addition, a 2019 study led by Kassandra Alcaraz, PhD, MPH, a public health researcher with the American Cancer Society, analyzed data from more than 580,000 adults and found that social isolation increases the risk of premature death from every cause for every race ([*American Journal of Epidemiology*, Vol. 188, No. 1, 2019](#)). According to Alcaraz, among black participants, social isolation doubled the risk of early death, while it increased the risk among white participants by 60 to 84 percent.

"Our research really shows that the magnitude of risk presented by social isolation is very similar in magnitude to that of obesity, smoking, lack of access to care and

physical inactivity," she says. In the study, investigators weighted several standard measures of social isolation, including marital status, frequency of religious service attendance, club meetings/group activities and number of close friends or relatives. They found that overall, race seemed to be a stronger predictor of social isolation than sex; white men and women were more likely to be in the least isolated category than were black men and women.

The American Cancer Society study is the largest to date on all races and genders, but previous research has provided glimpses into the harmful effects of social isolation and loneliness. A 2016 study led by Newcastle University epidemiologist Nicole Valtorta, PhD, for example, linked loneliness to a 30 percent increase in risk of stroke or the development of coronary heart disease ([Heart, Vol. 102, No. 13](#)). Valtorta notes that a lonely individual's higher risk of ill health likely stems from several combined factors: behavioral, biological and psychological.

"Lacking encouragement from family or friends, those who are lonely may slide into unhealthy habits," Valtorta says. "In addition, loneliness has been found to raise levels of stress, impede sleep and, in turn, harm the body. Loneliness can also augment depression or anxiety."

Last year, researchers at the Florida State University College of Medicine also found that loneliness is associated with a 40 percent increase in a person's risk of dementia (*The Journals of Gerontology: Series B*, online 2018). Led by Angelina Sutin, PhD, the study examined data on more than 12,000 U.S. adults ages 50 years and older. Participants rated their levels of loneliness and social isolation and completed a cognitive battery every two years for up to 10 years.

Among older adults in particular, loneliness is more likely to set in when an individual is dealing with functional limitations and has low family support, Hawkley says. Better self-rated health, more social interaction and less family strain reduce older adults' feelings of loneliness, according to a study, led by Hawkley, examining data from more than 2,200 older adults ([Research on Aging, Vol. 40, No. 4, 2018](#)). "Even among those who started out lonely, those who were in better health and socialized with others more often had much better odds of subsequently recovering from their loneliness," she says. A 2015 study led by Steven Cole, MD, a professor of medicine at the University of California, Los Angeles, provides additional clues as to why loneliness can harm overall health ([PNAS, Vol. 112, No. 49, 2015](#)). He and his colleagues examined gene expressions in leukocytes, white blood cells that play key roles in the immune system's response to infection. They found that the leukocytes of lonely participants—both humans and rhesus macaques—showed an increased expression of genes involved in inflammation and a decreased expression of genes involved in antiviral responses. Loneliness, it seems, can lead to long-term "fight-or-flight" stress signaling, which negatively affects immune system functioning. Simply put, people who feel lonely have less immunity and more inflammation than people who don't.



Combating loneliness

While the harmful effects of loneliness are well established in the research literature, finding solutions to curb chronic loneliness has proven more challenging, says Holt-Lunstad.

Developing effective interventions is not a simple task because there's no single underlying cause of loneliness, she says. "Different people may be lonely for different reasons, and so a one-size-fits-all kind of intervention is not likely to work because you need something that is going to address the underlying cause." Rokach notes that efforts to minimize loneliness can start at home, with teaching children that aloneness does not mean loneliness. Also, he says, schools can help foster environments in which children look for, identify and intervene when a peer seems lonely or disconnected from others.

In terms of additional ways to address social isolation and feelings of loneliness, research led by Christopher Masi, MD, and a team of researchers at the University of Chicago suggests that interventions that focus inward and address the negative thoughts underlying loneliness in the first place seem to help combat loneliness more than those designed to improve social skills, enhance social support or increase opportunities for social interaction (*Personality and Social Psychology Review*, Vol. 15, No. 3, 2011). The meta-analysis reviewed 20 randomized trials of interventions to decrease loneliness in children, adolescents and adults and showed that addressing what the researchers termed maladaptive social cognition through cognitive-behavioral therapy (CBT) worked best because it empowered patients to recognize and deal with their negative thoughts about self-worth and how others perceive them, says Hawkley, one of the study's co-authors.

Still, some research has found that engaging older adults in community and social groups can lead to positive mental health effects and reduce feelings of loneliness. Last year, Julene Johnson, PhD, a University of California, San Francisco researcher on aging, examined how joining a choir might combat feelings of loneliness among older

adults ([The Journals of Gerontology: Series B, online 2018](#)). Half of the study's 12 senior centers were randomly selected for the choir program, which involved weekly 90-minute choir sessions, including informal public performances. The other half of the centers did not participate in choir sessions. After six months, the researchers found no significant differences between the two groups on tests of cognitive function, lower body strength and overall psychosocial health. But they did find significant improvements in two components of the psychosocial evaluation among choir participants: This group reported feeling less lonely and indicated they had more interest in life. Seniors in the non-choir group saw no change in their loneliness, and their interest in life declined slightly.

Researchers at the University of Queensland in Australia have also found that older adults who take part in social groups such as book clubs or church groups have a lower risk of death ([BMJ Open, Vol. 6, No. 2, 2016](#)). Led by psychologist Niklas Steffens, PhD, the team tracked the health of 424 people for six years after they had retired and found that social group membership had a compounding effect on quality of life and risk of death. Compared with those still working, every group membership lost after retirement was associated with around a 10 percent drop in quality of life six years later. In addition, if participants belonged to two groups before retirement and kept these up over the following six years, their risk of death was 2 percent, rising to 5 percent if they gave up membership in one group and to 12 percent if they gave up membership in both.

"In this regard, practical interventions need to focus on helping retirees to maintain their sense of purpose and belonging by assisting them to connect to groups and communities that are meaningful to them," the authors say.

To that end, cohousing appears to be growing in popularity among young and old around the world as a way to improve social connections and decrease loneliness, among other benefits. Cohousing communities and mixed-age residences are intentionally built to bring older and younger generations together, either in whole neighborhoods within single-family homes or in larger apartment buildings, where they share dining, laundry and recreational spaces. Neighbors gather for parties, games, movies or other events, and the cohousing piece makes it easy to form clubs, organize child and elder care, and carpool. Hawkley and other psychologists argue that these living situations may also provide an antidote to loneliness, particularly among older adults. Although formal evaluations of their effectiveness in reducing loneliness remain scarce, cohousing communities in the United States now number 165 nationwide, according to the [Cohousing Association](#), with another 140 in the planning stages.

"Older adults have become so marginalized and made to feel as though they are no longer productive members of society, which is lonely-making in and of itself," Hawkley says. "For society to be healthy, we have to find ways to include all segments of the population, and many of these intergenerational housing programs seem to be doing a lot in terms of dispelling myths about old age and helping older individuals feel like they are important and valued members of society again."

Additional reading

[Life-saving Relationships](#)

Weir, K. *Monitor*, 2018

[Advancing Social Connection as a Public Health Priority in the United States](#)

Holt-Lunstad, J., et al. *American Psychologist*, 2017

[The Potential Public Health Relevance of Social Isolation and Loneliness: Prevalence, Epidemiology, and Risk Factors](#)

Holt-Lunstad, J. *Public Policy & Aging Report*, 2017

psychiatric stigma

The paradoxical dualism of psychiatric stigma Too similar, too different

[Psychiatr Bull \(2014\)](#). 2014 Aug; 38(4): 148–151.

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See "[The demonisation of psychiatrists in fiction \(and why real psychiatrists might want to do something about it\)](#)" on page 175.

See "[Bulletin comment: Openness, transparency and candour](#)" on page 180.

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Abstract

Challenges to psychiatric stigma fall between a rock and a hard place. Decreasing one prejudice may inadvertently increase another. Emphasising similarities between mental illness and 'ordinary' experience to escape the fear-related prejudices associated with the imagined 'otherness' of persons with mental illness risks conclusions that mental illness indicates moral weakness and the loss of any benefits of a medical model. An emphasis on illness and difference from normal experience risks a response of fear of the alien. Thus, a 'likeness-based' and 'unlikeness-based' conception of psychiatric stigma can lead to prejudices stemming from paradoxically opposing assumptions about mental illness. This may create a troubling impasse for anti-stigma campaigns.

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The paradox of psychiatric stigma: similar or different, blame or fear

'If only I could use this to show people that there really was something different about my brain, my life would be so much easier' - this was the recent reaction of a service user with a history of severe depression to a presentation of magnetic resonance imaging (MRI) images highlighting particularities of the depressed brain. He had experienced discrimination because his condition was viewed not as legitimate illness, but 'weakness and malingering', and he expressed a common desire for something to demonstrate a physical difference accompanying mental

illness - to display an objective reason for his symptoms, outside of his control. Prejudice against him seems rooted in ideas that he is too weak, lazy, selfish or devoid of willpower to manage the challenges of life like others, despite being, fundamentally, the same. Meanwhile, there is an important theme within anti-stigma work to emphasise the normality, prevalence and universality of mental illness, in the hope that stressing likeness and commonality will lead to a reduction in public fear and alienation.

Stigma is defined as 'a mark of disgrace' or as a distinguishing negative token. Thornicroft, for example, calls it 'a characteristic that individuals possess (or are believed to possess) that conveys a social identity that is devalued, or a mark of disgrace associated with a particular circumstance, quality, or person' (p. 9ff) and explains how it engenders prejudicial beliefs, which lead to discriminatory behaviour.¹ The idea of 'otherness' is central to psychiatric stigma. Yet my example shows a victim of discrimination actually suggesting that a substantive marker of difference could potentially reverse prejudice. It seems that, for some, psychiatric stigma cannot be eradicated by simply convincing people that mental illness involves no fundamental difference. So we have a perplexing paradox - stigma appears to stem from two opposing beliefs that those with mental illness are both different and also not actually different. Although there may be no simple solution to the problem of psychiatric stigma, a conceptual framework for explaining this central paradox might at least shed some light on the difficulties.

Although clearly multifaceted and complex, psychiatric stigma is also full of puzzling contradictions. It still appears that fear on the one hand and blame on the other dominate discriminatory attitudes towards mental illness. We find ourselves stuck between a rock and a hard place, where decreasing one stigmatising attitude may inadvertently increase another. Biomedical models might reduce blame and promote treatment,²⁻⁴ but they can increase perceptions of danger, desire for social distance and acceptance of more coercive treatment measures.⁵⁻⁹ Stressing affinity or psychosocial factors risks further alienating those with more severe mental illness, minimising the problems they face and taking us full circle back to the idea of mental illness as an inability to manage the stresses and challenges of life, resulting from weakness of personality, moral strength or self-control (not to mention the concomitant dangers of over-pathologising and medicating 'ordinary' stress reactions).^{10,11}

In this journal, Kingdon argued that even ideas like the one in four mantra do not sufficiently highlight commonality, and recommended replacing 'mental disorder' with a more 'socially inclusive' stress continuum model of mental illnesses as extreme variants of reaction to stresses faced by everybody.¹² In response,

Braithwaite¹³ maintains that the 'medicalisation of stress belittles major mental illness' and that there is no convincing evidence that a number of major mental illnesses are any more likely to be triggered by psychosocial stress than numerous physical conditions. Stigma, he argues, will not be eradicated by simply reconceptualising an illness to remove any biomedical distinguishing factors. Indeed, portraying major mental disorder as part of a normal stress continuum may actually increase stigma by belittling serious medical conditions.¹³ For Kingdon, to defeat stigma, we must emphasise affinity and 'normality'; for Braithwaite, difference and 'disorder'. However, a subsequent report suggests that choosing a 'stressed' or 'ill' model makes very little difference to public perception.¹⁴ As the authors point out, even a stress model leaves the difficult question of why "normal" mentally ill people react differently to stressful events which the majority of people can deal with?

Even if it seems tempting to downplay difference, this can be a risky strategy. If we suggest that mental illness is not substantively different from ordinary experience, how can we explain and understand its debilitating consequences without recourse to some type of moral judgement?

Moreover, what about symptoms and behaviours to which others cannot relate? Presenting mental illness as purely an extreme variant of ordinary behaviour might engender greater misunderstanding and suspicion surrounding symptoms which cannot be explained accordingly. A blogger from the Time to Change website comments on psychosis: 'Telling someone you have a mental illness is one thing. Telling them it's Bipolar is another. Telling them you hear voices, see people who aren't there and occasionally feel them touching you on the side of your face is quite another thing entirely'.¹⁵ Another blogger, a woman with schizophrenia, talks about interceding on behalf of a man 'being almost thrown out of a local coffee shop for looking a bit eccentric when he was unwell'. By comparing mental illness to a physical problem such as a broken limb, she could explain how the owner was being discriminatory and have the unwell man accepted. Without recourse to explanations involving illness and difference, the man would remain ostracised for abnormal, but controllable, behaviour.¹⁶

Equally, it is often assumed that downplaying difference will help people with mental illness to accept themselves. Metseagharun, writing in support of Kingdon's argument, says 'it is of course less bruising to anyone's ego to accept having a difficulty (or stress) than to accept having a disorder (an implicit indication of socially undesirable or deviant behaviour)'.¹⁷ But why should this be the case? When someone faces financial ruin after a manic episode or finds themselves unable to work or function, plagued by delusions, anxieties or

depression, why would it be reassuring to believe that the cause of these devastating problems was essentially their own inability in coping with stress? Conversely, a medical understanding may often help those with mental illness reach acceptance, find treatment and gain more control: 'accepting and gaining insight of my illness has enriched my life', comments a Time to Change blogger;¹⁸ another blogger understands his condition as similar to his hay fever: conditions which require medication and 'won't go away of their own accord'.¹⁸⁻²⁰

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Towards a likeness-based and unlikeness-based conception of stigma

The stigma debate must contend with such puzzling difficulties.²¹ Although increasing awareness and understanding are generally agreed to be crucial to battling stigma and discrimination, current initiatives still struggle (pp. 243-245).¹ For example, the UK Time to Change campaign, despite its achievements, has failed so far to fulfil significantly its key aim to improve knowledge or behaviour among the general public.²²

If we are want to promulgate knowledge or institute policy changes to reverse structural discrimination, without engendering negative assumptions, perhaps we need a clearer understanding of such misunderstandings and contradictions. It is here that a conceptual framework, which explicates psychiatric stigma as not just multidimensional or complex, but inherently paradoxical, might help. As previously mentioned, stigma stems from notions of otherness. With psychiatric stigma, however, the two major kinds of difference believed to differentiate the mentally 'ill' and 'healthy' seem to be in direct opposition, their being based on converse notions of unlikeness and likeness. Many people with mental illness will have experienced both types of prejudice, even from the same sources, despite apparent self-contradiction.

Unlikeness-based stigma is probably the more easily understood, with mental illness seen as making people intrinsically different, somehow 'alien' and thus easily feared, ridiculed or restrained. Yet, although we may fear those whom we see as different, those who cannot be understood, predicted or controlled, it would seem illogical to apportion blame for actions or behaviour unless we believe the agent to share common ground and equal capacities as ourselves for acting differently.

The root of attitudes such as blame may lie in stigma based on another equally disturbing view, which we might term likeness-based stigma and which stems from the idea of similarity and a view of mental illness as infirmity of character

rather than legitimate illness. Whereas unlikeness-based prejudice suggests that mental illness is a defect in the very qualities which define a normal human being, likeness-based stigma implies a problem that is moral rather than substantive or biological - that those with mental illness share the same biological and environmental factors as others, but lack the strength of character to deal with them. Because, however one looks at it, mental illness, like any health condition, sets aside those who experience it from those who do not. In the absence of other explanations, on the likeness-based model, people may well construe the differences in behaviours and experiences as stemming from some type of moral inferiority.

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Examples of likeness-based stigma

Much anti-stigma work focuses on unlikeness-based stigma, even though likeness-based stigma can be seen to be extremely prevalent and significant.

Although perceptions of mental illness vary in different societies and cultures, the view that the individual is in some way to blame for their condition is very common. In *Shunned*, Thornicroft has suggested that a perceived lack of willpower and notion of blame may even be the one thing which comes close to being a unifying global feature (pp. [176-179](#)).¹ He lists some common myths particular to mental illness and derived from real experiences of discrimination (p. [187](#)).¹ Although the idea of fundamental difference is very much at the heart of views such as 'all schizophrenics are dangerous and violent', many other beliefs point towards a 'likeness-based' view that people with mental illness are fundamentally the same, but lazy, weak or incapable, and therefore responsible and blameworthy for their condition: 'depression results from personality weakness or character flaw, and people could snap out if they tried harder'; the mentally ill are 'lazy and not trying'; 'mental illness is brought on by weakness of character'; 'if you have a mental illness, you can will it away, and being treated for a psychiatric disorder means you have in some way failed or are weak'; 'psychiatric disorders are not true medical illnesses like diabetes'.¹

Nor are such ideas restricted to private contexts. Discrimination by mental health professionals remains widespread²³ and service users often find themselves being held responsible for their conditions. An example is a common experience for service users, known as diagnostic overshadowing, which could be understood to stem from similar attitudes. This occurs when 'physical illness signs and symptoms are misattributed to psychiatric disorder', so that physical symptoms appear to be judged as either psychological in origin or of exaggerated severity,

and which may result in a lack of appropriate medical attention.²⁴⁻²⁶ Reflected here is an underlying attitude that psychiatric patients faced with ordinary challenges lack the moral strength to tolerate them as well as others do and are therefore in some way blameworthy or responsible for their symptoms and behaviours.

A couple of examples reveal that similar ideas can also be found within academic medicine. A 2009 *British Journal of Psychiatry* editorial on the moral content of psychiatric treatment argues that 'psychiatric treatment can enhance human morality' and that 'helping patients to be more virtuous is a proper concern of psychiatry'.²⁷ The same authors subsequently argue elsewhere that for conditions such as depression, willpower to change behaviour has a crucial and direct effect on the condition itself - 'patients must decide to behave differently and have the will to do it' - whereas medical interventions, even in the case of depression, are presented as secondary means to 'bolster resolve and willpower'.²⁸ They sharply differentiate these from conditions such as diabetes or cancer, where willpower only affects factors such as adherence to treatment.²⁸ In a very different context, Schlaepfer *et al*,²⁹ in response to concerns that deep brain stimulation might affect personality, state that, for psychiatric conditions, 'modification of mood and cognitive behaviour - and thus important elements of personality - is not an unwanted, coincidental side effect, but rather the main intended outcome.'²⁹ Although it is hard to imagine a psychiatric intervention underpinned by a more neurological model than psychiatric neurosurgery, the authors still seem to conflate alterations in mood and cognitive behaviour caused by treatment-resistant major depression or obsessive-compulsive disorder with the service user's personality and see treatment in terms of modification of personality. Without intending to suggest prejudice in either set of authors or that this brief discussion reflects the full complexity of the authors' ideas, both pieces lend themselves to the idea that mental illness is, to a significant degree, constituted by defects of personality or morality in individuals, and that the aim of psychiatric treatment is to rectify these weaknesses, rather than to treat an illness viewed as independent from the true personality of the affected individual.

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What are the implications?

Highlighting the importance of likeness-based stigma does not mean that an unlikeness-based view of mental illness as abnormal, alien and to be feared is not a prevalent and major cause of discrimination. Such attitudes are all too clear in recent examples such as the 'mental patient' and 'psycho ward' outfits withdrawn from two major supermarket chains³⁰ and the controversy over the

sensationalising and inaccurate article in a major tabloid on numbers of people killed by 'mental patients'.³¹

However, we should not also undervalue apparent benefits of illness models which entail 'difference' or assume that the solution is simply to hide or de-emphasise uncomfortable aspects of mental disorder.³² For example, illness models seem to have generated an increase in willingness to seek treatment, whereas major progress against structural discrimination, such as the decriminalisation of suicide, appears largely to have resulted from official recognition of suicide as stemming predominantly from mental illness. Moreover, stress continuum, prevalence or recovery models could lead to decreased public spending on health services, through viewing the service user as primarily responsible for their own recovery.³³

The formulation of psychiatric stigma as presented here suggests that it emerges from two perspectives on those with mental illness that appear to be paradoxically opposed. This would seem to pose an immense difficulty for anti-stigma campaigns. Highly sophisticated messages and interventions have been developed in this field, but I suggest that there might be value in thinking through the implications of the paradox. Key questions would then be: if one accepts that there are important differences between the experiences and behaviours of people with a mental illness and the rest of the population, how can the negative evaluations of those differences be challenged? And, given that these negative evaluations may well remain negative, for most of the differences would not be deemed desirable if given the choice, how can the link between these negative evaluations and stigma be broken?

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Footnotes

Declaration of interest None.

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Erasing Shame in Sexuality A homosexual doctor cries at inadequacy of his treatment of homosexual patient

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Through the glass door to his isolation room, I saw him sitting on a plastic chair, alone in the dark. I had been called in as a member of the hospital's special pathogens response team to swab the painful lesions on the patient's knees and wrists for monkeypox testing. As I stood outside his room donning my PPE (personal protective equipment), I physically transformed from a gay man considered high risk for monkeypox in the community to a health care worker who was overprotected from a nonlethal, preventable, treatable, yet highly stigmatized virus. The rainbow flag and Black Lives Matter pins on my identification badge—and the ones within my heart—were hidden deep beneath the layers of my gown.

I stepped in and introduced myself, noticing that missing from the patient's room were all the usual equipment and basic resources I had come to expect. He had no stretcher, no table, no gown, no cup of water, and no place for me to sit as we spoke. I worked to gain his trust, asking him open-ended questions about his symptoms as well as his life to try and ease the situation for him. But the more I asked, the more I noticed his eye contact evaded mine and instead he appeared embarrassed and full of shame. At one point, my face shield slipped off, and he reflexively pushed himself back as if to protect me from himself. After putting the shield back on, I squatted next to him and held his hand through my gloves. "It's OK," I tried to reassure him. "We'll get you through this—*our* community will get through this."

As we discussed next steps, I emphasized that even though we didn't have confirmation, his case was strongly suspicious for monkeypox. He should tell anyone he may have been in close contact with to call 311 for further guidance. His test results would be back in 5 to 7 days, but in the meantime, he should act as if he had the virus, staying isolated at home. As the words came out of my mouth, tears started coming down his face. He looked down and asked apprehensively if isolating at home meant he could not go to his job at a local restaurant. My heart broke as I confirmed that yes, he would have to stay home.

He sobbed as I prepared the collection swabs and vials and continued crying as I vigorously swabbed 2 different lesions on his body, 2 times each. I apologized for the discomfort but had nothing I could offer to make the situation better. I told him I'd write him a note for work and see if the social worker could meet with him to identify any programs that might provide financial assistance while isolating (only to find out there were none). But neither could provide consolation. As a medical community, we had failed him: he had contracted a preventable virus, was unable to be tested outside of an emergency department setting, felt stigmatized as we cared for him, and had no financial or logistical support while being instructed to isolate. As the clinician in the room, I felt as if I personally represented the lack of compassion the health care system had shown him.

Yet I felt his pain—not just as a physician, but as a gay man.

A decade ago, I started on my path to medical school after being banned from donating blood for being a gay man. I will never forget the humiliation of walking out of the college auditorium while still closeted and trying to figure out my sexuality, hiding my face from my friends who didn't understand why I had to leave without giving blood. This moment filled me with shame, then rage,

and eventually a commitment to understanding medicine and health policy so that I could help eradicate prejudice in health care. The vulnerability I felt while attempting to donate blood continues to inform my approach to medicine: prioritizing the empowerment of my patients.

But as I now care for patients with possible monkeypox and inform them of testing, vaccination, and isolation policies, I relive this earlier trauma. I remember how ostracized I felt being told that gay sexual activity of any kind was so high risk for HIV that my blood was considered too risky to even consider screening for donation. I relive being labeled “high risk” simply because of the sex of my sexual partner and not for the types of activities I engaged in and associated infection risk. I relive the anger of facing this judgment despite never having even been offered LGBTQ+ inclusive safe sex education. I relive the feeling of abandonment—that as a gay man, it has been predetermined by those in power that I am a public health threat and a disease vector, while historically being denied basic human rights to guarantee choice in how and when to have safe sexual encounters.

I went into medicine to make this exact moment better for patients, particularly those who identify as LGBTQ. To help them feel valued and whole, not stigmatized, judged, embarrassed, or shamed. Yet as I took off my isolation gown and wiped off the biohazard bags with the patient’s monkeypox swabs inside, I walked away recognizing that instead I had become part of the system. That in learning and practicing medicine, I had accepted stereotypes and biases in clinical reasoning and policy. Here I was, practically receiving hazard pay to help overcome the stigma and fear of monkeypox as it disproportionately affects gay and bisexual men.

As a physician, my relationship with my sexuality is complex. As a White, cisgender man living in a liberal city with a loving husband, a (now) supportive family, and years of therapy, I have had the time, space, and privilege to process my internalized homophobia and become more comfortable and confident in my sense of self. When the rare patient calls me a homophobic slur, I can walk away genuinely feeling sorry that someone harbors such hatred toward others. I also feel confident that they are in the wrong—that my sexual orientation brings a diversity to medical practice and intellectual thought that helps improve our ability to provide care. That being gay is not a character flaw but a strength that allows me to better understand and empathize with the lived experience of vulnerable patients.

Returning home from the hospital after meeting this patient, I took off my scrubs, curled up in bed with my husband, and cried. In his arms, I always feel safest. To do my patients justice and to do myself justice, I must work to erase the shame in sexuality that is too often reflected in medical policies and practices. I must continue to use my privilege as a physician to ensure humanity, compassion, and respect for all patients in health care and beyond.

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https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Stigma_management

Stigma management is the process of concealing or disclosing aspects of one's identity to minimize social stigma.[1]

When a person receives unfair treatment or alienation due to a social stigma, the effects can be detrimental. Social stigmas are defined as any aspect of an individual's identity that is devalued in a social context. These stigmas can be categorized as visible or invisible, depending on whether the stigma is readily apparent to others. Visible stigmas refer to characteristics such as race, age, gender, physical disabilities, or deformities, whereas invisible stigmas refer to characteristics such as sexual orientation, gender identity, religious affiliation, early pregnancy, certain diseases, or mental illnesses.

When individuals possess invisible stigmas, they must decide whether or not to reveal their association with a devalued group to others.[4] This decision can be an incredibly difficult one, as revealing one's invisible stigma can have both positive[5] and negative consequences depending on several situational factors. In contrast, a visible stigma requires immediate action to diminish communication tension and acknowledge a deviation from the norm. People possessing visible stigmas often use compensatory strategies to reduce potential interpersonal discrimination that they may face.

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Invisible stigma

Invisible stigmas are defined as "characteristics of a person that are socially devalued but are not readily apparent to others", [6] such as having a stigmatized sexual orientation, gender identity, religious affiliation, LGBT association, early pregnancy, disease, illness, etc. Invisible social identities invoke some distinct issues that cannot be easily collapsed under traditional organizational diversity research that focuses on visible differences.

When a person possesses an invisible stigma, they have to determine how to reveal their stigmas, when to reveal their stigmas, if to reveal their stigmas, whether or not their stigmas are already known to others, and whether other people would be accepting of their stigma. [8]

Invisible stigma management

Individuals possessing invisible stigmas can choose either passing or revealing strategies in order to manage their identities when interacting with others. Passing strategies involve strategies that do not disclose the invisible stigma to others, including fabrication, concealment, and discretion. Revealing strategies involve identity management strategies that seek to disclose or reveal the invisible stigmas to others, such as signaling, normalizing, and differentiating.

Passing

Passing can be defined as "a cultural performance whereby one member of a defined social group masquerades as another in order to enjoy the privileges afforded to the dominant group". [9] In other words, passing is simply

choosing not to disclose one's invisible stigma in order to appear to be part of the dominant (i.e., not stigmatized) group. Those who pass must be constantly aware of social cues in order to avoid accidentally disclosing information about their hidden identity, a worry that most individuals from dominant groups do not share.[2] People may rely on several different strategies for passing or concealing their invisible stigma at work. These strategies include fabrication, concealment, and discretion.[10]

Fabrication

The fabrication strategy involves purposefully presenting false information about oneself in order to hide one's invisible stigma. Individuals using this strategy utilize deception to create a false identity in order to avoid revealing their stigmatized trait.[10] In research involving lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgender (LGBT) individuals, Woods identified a similar strategy called counterfeiting which is simply the act of constructing a false heterosexual identity, which also serves as a nice example of the passing strategy of fabrication.[11] LGBT individuals engaging in this passing strategy may even go so far as to pretend they have a heterosexual partner in front of their coworkers.[11]

Concealment

The concealment strategy involves taking preventative measures to keep others from discovering personal characteristics for fear that may reveal an individual's invisible stigma.[10] Individuals using this strategy would not actively use deception like individuals using the fabrication strategy would, but they would still take an active role in carefully protecting themselves from revealing too much personal information. In research involving LGBT individuals, Woods[11] has identified a very similar strategy called avoidance which is simply revealing no information about one's sexual identity in order to avoid disclosure on this topic.

Discretion

The discretion strategy is subtly different from the concealment strategy as it involves an individual avoiding questions or revealing information that is specifically related to their invisible stigma.[10] Discretion is not as active of a passing strategy as the other two strategies, but it does involve interpersonal elusiveness and speaking in ambiguous language when the conversation threatens to potentially reveal one's stigmatized identity.[12] An example of this strategy (and a way to distinguish it from concealment) would be a person who is very willing to reveal personal information to their coworker but is also very reluctant to discuss any topics that they think may be related to their invisible stigma.

Revealing

When a person chooses to unveil an otherwise invisible stigma to their coworkers, they are choosing to reveal their stigma in that situation. It is important to note that individuals may vary in the degree to which they reveal invisible stigmas to their coworkers.[13] For example, employees may choose to reveal their stigma to everyone they encounter, or they might judiciously choose a select few that they are comfortable with telling about their invisible stigma. People may rely on several different strategies for revealing their invisible stigmas at work. These strategies include signaling, normalizing, and differentiating.[13]

The signaling strategy involves avoiding complete disclosure of one's invisible stigma to his/her coworkers. Rather, people who use this strategy tend to drop hints and send signals to their coworkers without having to completely reveal their invisible stigma. Examples of signals may include the use of cryptic language, bringing up conversation topics that are specific to a stigmatized group, using symbols that are specific to a stigmatized group, and/or the use of nonverbal cues consistent with one's stigmatized group membership.[13] Individuals using this strategy are essentially inviting others to discover their stigma by providing enough clues for peers without directly revealing their stigma.[11]

Normalizing

The normalizing strategy involves revealing one's invisible stigma, but then minimizing its significance as to appear just as normal as everyone else.[13] While this strategy does involve disclosure of one's invisible stigma, it also involves an attempt by stigmatized individuals to assimilate into organizations effectively and establish as normal of an existence as they can.[14][15] Researchers have suggested that this strategy helps stigmatized individuals strike a balance between the desire to reveal their stigma and dealing with the consequences that may result from their disclosure.[15]

Differentiating

The differentiating strategy involves not only revealing one's invisible stigma, but also emphasizing it and how it differentiates one from others. People who use this strategy try to eliminate unfair judgment by presenting their identity as equally acceptable when compared to others.[13] Some researchers have referred to this strategy as deploying one's identity, citing individuals who reveal their stigmas in order to test the perceptions of dominant organizational groups in an effort to inspire organizational change.[16][17]

Antecedents

Organizational diversity climate

Diversity climate is a term coined by Tsui and Gutek[18] referring to social norms of acceptance or discrimination established within a workplace environment. As one might expect, research has shown that accepting work environments promote more open communication (i.e., revealing) among their employees with invisible stigmas.[12][19] Accepting work environments can include supportive coworkers,[20][21] supportive managers,[22] or simply the presence of other individuals who have revealed their invisible stigma without experiencing negative consequences (Ragins & Cornwell, 2007).[21]

Professional and industry norms

The norms of one's overarching industry may have implications for stigmatized individuals' likelihood of passing or revealing in the workplace.[13] Indeed, some have noted that individuals working for conservative industries such as the military may be less likely to reveal their stigma[23] than individuals who work in industries that may actually encourage employees to disclose personal information about themselves, like human services.[24]

Legal protections

Some individuals with invisible stigmas are protected under laws at various governmental levels (i.e., local, state, and/or federal), while others are not considered among these protected groups. Not surprisingly, those with invisible stigmas that are protected under law (e.g., disability) are more likely to reveal their stigma than those with invisible stigmas that are not protected under law (e.g., sexual orientation).[25] It's also important to note that, in the case of disability status, stigmatized individuals may actually be required to reveal their stigma in order to receive certain workplace benefits.

Interpersonal context

An individual's likelihood of passing or revealing is also affected by the relationship they have with the person they are interacting with as well as the demographic characteristics of the person they are interacting with.[13] Understandably, individuals are more willing to reveal stigmatized information to those that they trust.[26] Additionally, an individual may be more likely to reveal their invisible stigma to a person who possesses the same stigma.[27] Finally, individuals may be generally more likely to reveal their stigmas to females than to males, believing females to be more effective communicators, especially regarding sensitive topics.[26]

Propensity toward risk-taking

Given that individuals vary in their willingness to take risks,[28] the idea has been proposed that individuals higher in risk-taking propensity will be more likely to reveal their stigma at work than those who are lower in risk-taking propensity.[13] This prediction stems from the fact that choosing to reveal an invisible stigma at work could be a very risky decision, especially if one receives (or perceives that they will receive) discriminatory treatment as a result of their disclosure.

Self-monitoring

Self-monitoring can be defined as the act of controlling and managing the impression one puts forward to ensure that social roles and expectations are being met.[29] While self-monitoring ability may not be directly related to passing or revealing behaviors, it likely is related to choosing effective strategies for managing one's identity. Research has stated that high self-monitors are better able to examine their environment for signs of acceptance when deciding to pass or reveal,[30] while low self-monitors may have more trouble effectively managing the impressions they are making.[31]

Development stage

An adult's level of sophistication and how developed their stigmatized identity is may also have an effect on individuals' willingness to reveal an invisible stigma. Highly developed individuals with stigmas that are central to their self-concept tend to see their stigmatized identity equally valid as other identities,[32] and thus should theoretically not be as afraid to reveal it to others. Indeed, research has shown that individuals who ultimately reveal their stigmatized identity tend to be more assured of that identity than individuals who choose to pass.[33][34]

Consequences

Consequences of passing

The main issue that can arise from passing is that the individual feels as though they are not being true to themselves, which can create an inner sense of turmoil and lead to psychological strain for the person hiding their identity.[2][9] Additionally, fears associated with revealing one's invisible stigma (among those who are currently passing) have been shown to lead to a myriad of negative workplace consequences, including lowered job satisfaction, less organizational commitment, and higher turnover intentions.[21] Interpersonal consequences can also arise when an individual is passing by not revealing much personal information in the workplace. These consequences include strained social relationships, social isolation, and limited mentoring opportunities.[10][22]

Consequences of revealing

Although revealing could have the positive effect of reducing the psychological strain and dissonance associated with passing strategies, many negative consequences could also result from revealing a devalued stigmatized identity. Potential consequences include opening oneself up to prejudice and discriminatory treatment at work. These negative consequences could become magnified if stigmas are revealed in an organization that is not supportive of the individual's invisible stigma.[13] However, if an individual can produce social change and reduce their dissonance associated with passing by revealing their stigma, revealing in the workplace might end up being worth the risk in the long run.[16][35] It is also important to note that revealing is not always a voluntary activity. For example, disabled individuals who require accommodation in the workplace must disclose the nature of their disability in order to obtain benefits under the Americans with Disabilities Act. This disclosure often unintentionally forces a person to reveal when their disability would otherwise be invisible to others.[36]

The disclosure processes model

As summarized in the above sections, individuals with invisible stigmas engage in stigma management by making decisions about whether to pass or to reveal as well as the specific strategies they will use to do so. These decisions may lead to both positive and negative consequences depending on the situation. The Disclosure Processes Model (DPM)[6] provides an explanation for when disclosure (revealing) is beneficial for individuals with invisible stigmas. Unlike the majority of studies on stigma management, DPM views disclosure as an ongoing process, as people with invisible stigmas must constantly make decisions regarding when to reveal and when to conceal their stigmas throughout their lifetime. This model suggests that disclosure can lead to a number of different outcomes at the individual, dyadic, and social contextual levels. Also, this model suggests that alleviation of inhibition, social support, and changes in social information mediate the effect of disclosure on these outcomes. In summary, the model highlights the impact of five main components in this process— the antecedent goals, the disclosure event itself, the mediating processes, the outcomes, and the feedback loop.

Antecedent goals

One main contribution of the disclosure processes model is to incorporate dispositional factors, namely antecedent goals, into the process of stigma management. The DPM posits that disclosure is regulated by the goal orientation (either approach-focused or avoidance-focused) held by individuals. Approach-focused goals are associated with

attention to positive stimuli, positive affect, and approach-focused coping strategies, whereas avoidance-focused goals are associated with attention to negative stimuli, negative effect, and avoidance-focused coping strategies. The model suggests that goals influence outcomes throughout the entire disclosure process. Therefore, it is critical to understand how the goal orientations lead people to disclose in order to understand when disclosure is beneficial.

Disclosure event

A disclosure event is defined by Chaudoir and Fisher as "the verbal communication that occurs between a discloser and a interaction partner regarding the discloser's possession of a concealable stigmatized identity".[37] It can range from explicitly talking about invisible stigmas with the interaction partner to first "testing the waters" by introducing the topic indirectly before fully disclosing. During the disclosure event, the content – overall depth, breadth, duration, and emotional content – can impact the reaction of the interaction partner, The positive reactions of the interaction partner can, in turn, influence the discloser's behavior.[38][39]

Goals and the disclosure event

The model predicts that disclosure goals effect the content of the disclosure event and the interaction partner response. On one hand, individuals with avoidance-focused goals disclose less frequently because they tend to focus on avoiding the possibility of social rejection and conflict. When they do decide to disclose, these individuals tend to use certain disclosure methods that they believe can minimize their psychological distress by social rejection (e.g. sending an email rather than talking face to face with the interaction partner). By using these methods, however, the disclosure is more likely to be perceived negatively by the interaction partners.

On the other hand, individuals with approach-focused goals tend to focus on the possibility of gaining social support, therefore use more direct communication strategies. They are also shown to be better at self-regulating and are more attuned to the presence of supportive interaction partner reactions. As a result, individuals with approach-focused goals may be more likely to benefit from disclosure than individuals with avoidance-focused goals.

Disclosure mediating processes and outcomes

Alleviation of inhibition

People with avoidance goals tend to be more sensitive to the possibility of social rejection and are likely to adopt avoidant coping strategies to deal with information about their identity.[40] Therefore, they tend to experience distress or difficulty coping with their concealable stigma because they typically use passing strategies. Through alleviation of inhibition mechanism, in which people are offered the opportunity to express previously suppressed emotions and thoughts, the DPM states that these individuals may actually be most likely to benefit from disclosure.

Social support

One of the negative consequences of passing is strained social relationship with co-workers, as stated in the previous section. Therefore, disclosure can have a substantial impact on well-being as a result of obtaining social support. For example, disclosure of sexual orientation in the workplace leads to greater job satisfaction and lower job anxiety if

positive reactions to disclosures are received from co-workers.[41] In other words, receiving positive reactions from interaction partners through disclosure can lead to positive outcomes in the workplace. The DPM suggests that people who possess approach-focused goals utilize more complex self-regulatory strategies that are critical throughout the full disclosure process (e.g. selecting appropriate interaction partners, communicating effectively about sensitive information), and therefore, they may be more likely to benefit from disclosure through collecting greater social support.

Changes in social information

A fundamental change in social information occurs after disclosing as people and their disclosure interaction partners now share or "co-own" information about the concealable stigma.[42] The disclosure can then dramatically impact subsequent individual behavior, specific interactions between the discloser and confidant, and interactions within the broader social context. For instance, after employees disclosure, they may raise awareness of their identities and, as a consequence, effectively reduce the related stigma throughout the organization. Moreover, the model makes a suggestion on the role of goals among the three mediation processes. Specifically, in terms of predicting positive outcomes, goals may not play as a significant role in Changes in Social Information as in the other two processes. This is probably because Changes in Social Information result from the objective informational content of the identity whereas the Alleviation of Inhibition and Social Support result from self-regulatory effects of disclosure goals.

Feedback loop

The DPM suggests that a singular disclosure event can affect both future disclosure likelihood and long-term psychological benefits. Approach-focused disclosure goals may maintain upward spirals toward greater visibility by gradually benefiting the disclosure, while avoidance-focused disclosure goals may initiate downward spirals toward greater concealment by gradually de-benefiting the disclosure. In upward spirals, individuals feel disclosing their identity more comfortably, greater support for their identity, viewing themselves more positively, and possessing a more unified sense of self. On the other hand, there are opposite effects on individuals who fall into the downward spirals.[43]

Practical implications

One important implication of the disclosure processes model is that there are individual differences in whether interpersonal disclosure can be beneficial. Individuals with avoidance-focused goals engage in self-regulatory efforts that weaken their ability collecting positive responses from their confidants, which also increases their chances of social rejection. This group of people may be best served by other methods of disclosure, such as by disclosing in expressive writing or therapeutic settings where they are protected from receiving social rejection.

The model also suggests that interventions with a focus on encouraging individuals to explicitly identify their disclosure goals may be one effective strategy in maximizing the benefits of disclosure. Therefore, practitioners are recommended to screen and identify individuals with strong avoidance-focused disclosure goals and assist them in setting new, approach-focused disclosure goals or helping them find alternative methods of disclosure (e.g., written disclosure).

Visible stigmas

Visible stigmas are defined as physical characteristics that are socially devalued and are readily apparent to others, such as race, age, gender, and physical disabilities or deformities.

Visible stigma management

Visible stigma management is very different from the management of invisible stigmas. However, when invisible stigmas shift along the continuum from being completely invisible to completely visible, they begin to operate in ways that are similar to visible stigmas. In other words, once an invisible stigma becomes visible (by wearing clothes or markers that identify one's self, or by being 'outed' by others), that stigma can then be managed in similar ways as visible stigmas. In order to manage visible stigmas (or stigmas that have been made apparent to others), targets must engage in compensatory strategies, including acknowledgement, providing individuating information, and increased positivity. These strategies are used to pre-emptively reduce interpersonal discrimination that may occur as a result of an explicitly apparent stigma.

Compensatory strategies

Several studies show that people with visible stigmas do in fact use compensatory strategies. When women believe that their writing will be evaluated by a sexist grader, they attempt to portray themselves as having non-traditional gender roles.[44] Similarly, when black individuals are informed that they will be interacting with somebody who is a racist, they disclosed more information to their interaction partners. They were also rated by independent coders as being more engaged, more interactive, and warmer when interacting with targets that were perceived to be prejudice towards blacks than when they interacted with targets that were not perceived to have this prejudice. Lastly, obese women behave differently when they feel that their interaction partners can see them versus when they think that they can't be seen. When obese women believe that they are visible to their interaction partners, they use more likeable and socially skilled behaviors compared to when they think they can not be seen. This is likely done to counteract the negative prejudice that most people have against obese women. Taken together, these studies all demonstrate that individuals with stigmas do utilize a series of compensatory strategies in order to manage their visible stigmas.

Acknowledgement

Several studies have shown that people with visible stigmas engage in the compensatory strategy of acknowledgement, referring to the act of openly addressing one's stigma. This strategy has been shown to be effective in improving perceptions of people with visible stigmas.[47][48] For instance, individuals with visible physical disabilities are less likely to be viewed with disdain, pity, or contempt when they explicitly acknowledged their physical disability.[49] Researchers have proposed that this effect is due to the fact that acknowledging one's stigma releases discomfort and tension during an interaction and that not acknowledging one's stigma is viewed as an attempt to ignore or avoid talking about one's stigma.[50] Acknowledging has been proposed to be effective in cases where it increases perceptions of adjustment within the stigmatized individual and reduces the suppression of negative stigma-related thoughts on the part of the perceivers. In a study on job applicants with visible stigmas,

applicants who used the strategy of acknowledgement received less interpersonal discrimination than those who did not, as rated by both the applicants and independent raters.

Individuating information

Some individuals with visible stigmas also adopt the compensatory strategy of providing individuating information to their interaction partners. This information allows the interaction partner to evaluate the target on an individual level rather than as a product of their stigma. When interaction partners are not given any information about a stigmatized individual, they tend to use stereotypes about that person's stigma during evaluation. For instance, when told to select a leader, both men and women tend to select male leaders rather than female leaders when given no other information. However, when additional information is given about the individual, people are less likely to rely on their stereotypes.[52] Similarly, when job applicants with visible stigmas provide individuating information to hiring managers, they are able to partially reduce the amount of interpersonal discrimination that they face .[7]

Increased positivity

Lastly, some individuals with visible stigmas choose to use the compensatory strategy of increased positivity in order to manage their identities. These individuals change their verbal, para-verbal, and nonverbal behaviors to increase the positivity and likeability of their interactions with others. As an example, black students tend to demonstrate behaviors that are more engaging and likeable during the interaction when told that their interaction partners are prejudiced.[45] Similar findings have been found with overweight individuals feeling they are being stereotyped.[46] Several studies indicate that individuals with visible stigmas do indeed try to demonstrate positive behaviors when interacting with other individuals, especially with those who are perceived to be especially prejudiced. They do so with the intention of decreasing potential negativity or discrimination that they may face and potentially increasing the perceptions of their stigmatized group. In one study on job applicants with visible stigmas, those who used the strategy of increased positivity were found to remediate the interpersonal discrimination that they faced, as rated by the applicants, observers, and independent coders.[7]

Solutions for organizations

When an organization enforces clear policies and practices that forbid discrimination based on sexual orientation, LGBT employees report less discrimination,[25] which should lead to fewer lawsuits and turnover. When an organization voluntarily adopts policies that demonstrate an accepting and non-judgmental environment, a person can seek support for their stigma (e.g., domestic partner benefits).[13] Pregnant women in work environments that use supplementing policies (such as paid leave or remote work) often stay at work into the late stages of pregnancy, and usually return sooner compared to women at unaccommodating organizations.[53] Practices such as these not only benefit the individual, but they also benefit the organization in the long run. Training employees, managers, and supervisors through diversity workshops serves to better educate everyone on the misconceptions surrounding LGBT workers, and should be used to address other stigmas as well. By presenting facts and defining inappropriate behaviors, organizations show their acceptance and tolerance of stigmas.[54] When affirmative policies and practices are up-front and seem sincere, stigmatized groups face less discrimination,[54] which should lead to higher employee morale, and greater workplace productivity.

Issue of measurement

One major issue that has been raised in regard to identity management is an issue of measurement. Some researchers have expressed that research cannot move forward without appropriate measurement techniques and appropriately conceptualized behaviors for passing and revealing in the workplace.[13] Indeed, it can be hard to distinguish between the passing behaviors identified by Herek.[10] As for future research, other researchers have called for a better understanding of the underlying processes involved in the decision to disclose in addition to increased specificity in the classification of groups with invisible stigmas.[55]

Problems with dichotomizing stigma

Past research has simplified identity management strategies by dichotomizing stigma into purely visible or purely invisible. This is not the case, however, in that stigmas are never completely visible or completely invisible. Oftentimes, people can tell (to some degree) whether or not the person they are interacting with has an invisible stigma, even before that person engages in disclosure behaviors. This can be due to visual, audio, or movement-based cues, or due to rumors told by other co-workers (Ambady, Conner, & Hallahan, 1999; Linville, 1998)[full citation needed]. Researchers should begin to study the degree to which people with a stigmatized identity choose to either express or suppress their concealable stigma when that stigma is somewhat known by the interaction partner.

Future directions

Researchers have called for future studies to focus on invisible stigma in groups, the timing and trust involved in revealing, and the potential for organizational change as a result of revealing strategies.[13] Researchers should examine how individuals possessing invisible stigmas affect the performance of a group. Additionally, researchers may examine how a group's effectiveness in responding to a disclosure of an invisible stigma could positively or negatively affect future group outcomes. Furthermore, researchers have yet to determine how the timing of disclosure affects the disclosure interaction. Some studies suggest that disclosing later in the interaction leads to the most benefit. When individuals disclose too early in an interaction, they cause their interaction partners to feel uncomfortable, and the partners may feel as though they must also disclose private information. When individuals disclose too late in an interaction, they may hurt the interaction because they will be seen as dishonest and not trusting of the relationship to have revealed earlier on in the interaction (Quinn, 2006). Lastly, there is an opportunity for researchers to study how organizations can change when employees decide to reveal vs. conceal their invisible stigmas. When employees with invisible stigmas choose to conceal their stigma, it could lead to continued institutionalized stigmatization of those social characteristics. On the other hand, when employees choose to disclose, the level of acceptance of their disclosure can have far-reaching consequences for the climate and environment of organizations. Disclosure interactions that are met with positivity and acceptance could lead future employees to feel open and free to express their potentially stigmatized characteristics with less fear of judgment.

Hibakusha "person affected by exposure [to radioactivity]" From Wikipedia, the free encyclopedia

<https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Hibakusha>

Definition

The word hibakusha is Japanese, originally written in kanji. While the term Hibakusha 被爆者 (hi 被 "affected" + baku 爆 "bomb" + sha 者 "person") has been used before in Japanese to designate any victim of bombs, its worldwide democratisation led to a definition concerning the survivors of the atomic bombs dropped in Japan by the United States Army Air Forces on the 6 and 9 August 1945.

Anti-nuclear movements and associations, among others of hibakusha, spread the term to designate any direct victim of nuclear disaster, including the ones of the nuclear plant in Fukushima.[1] They therefore prefer the writing 被曝者 (substituting baku 爆 with the homophonous 曝 "exposition") or "person affected by the exposition", implying "person affected by nuclear exposure".[2] This definition tends to be adopted since 2011.[3]

The juridic status of hibakusha is allocated to certain people, mainly by the Japanese government.

Official recognition

The Atomic Bomb Survivors Relief Law defines hibakusha as people who fall into one or more of the following categories: within a few kilometers of the hypocenters of the bombs; within 2 km of the hypocenters within two weeks of the bombings; exposed to radiation from fallout; or not yet born but carried by pregnant women in any of these categories.[4] The Japanese government has recognized about 650,000 people as hibakusha. As of March 31, 2022, 118,935 were still alive, mostly in Japan. The government of Japan recognizes about 1% of these as having illnesses caused by radiation.[6] Hibakusha are entitled to government support. They receive a certain amount of allowance per month, and the ones certified as suffering from bomb-related diseases receive a special medical allowance.

The memorials in Hiroshima and Nagasaki contain lists of the names of the hibakusha who are known to have died since the bombings. Updated annually on the anniversaries of the bombings, as of August 2022, the memorials record the names of 526,000 hibakusha; 333,907 in Hiroshima[8] and 192,310 in Nagasaki.

.....

Discrimination [fear]

Terumi Tanaka, hibakusha of Nagasaki, tells young people about his experience and shows pictures. United Nations's International Atomic Energy Agency building in Vienna, during the NPT PrepCom 2007.

Hibakusha and their children were (and still are) victims of severe discrimination when it comes to prospects of marriage or work due to public ignorance about the consequences of radiation sickness, with much of the public believing it to be hereditary or even contagious. This is despite the fact that no statistically demonstrable increase of birth defects/congenital malformations was found among the later conceived children born to survivors of the nuclear weapons used at Hiroshima and Nagasaki, or found in the later conceived children of cancer survivors who had previously received radiotherapy. The surviving women of Hiroshima and Nagasaki, that could conceive, who were exposed to substantial amounts of radiation, went on and had children with no higher incidence of abnormalities/birth defects than the rate which is observed in the Japanese average.

Studs Terkel's book *The Good War* includes a conversation with two hibakusha. The postscript observes:

There is considerable discrimination in Japan against the hibakusha. It is frequently extended toward their children as well: socially as well as economically. "Not only hibakusha, but their children, are refused employment," says Mr. Kito. "There are many among them who do not want it known that they are hibakusha."

— Studs Terkel (1984), *The Good War*.

The Japan Confederation of A- and H-Bomb Sufferers Organizations (日本被団協, Nihon Hidankyō) is a group formed by hibakusha in 1956 with the goals of pressuring the Japanese government to improve support of the victims and lobbying governments for the abolition of nuclear weapons.

Some estimates are that 140,000 people in Hiroshima (38.9% of the population) and 70,000 people in Nagasaki (28.0% of the population) died in 1945, but how many died immediately as a result of exposure to the blast, heat, or due to radiation, is unknown. One Atomic Bomb Casualty Commission (ABCC) report discusses 6,882 people examined in Hiroshima, and 6,621 people examined in Nagasaki, who were largely within 2000 meters from the hypocenter, who suffered injuries from the blast and heat but died from complications frequently compounded by acute radiation syndrome (ARS), all within about 20–30 days.

In the rare cases of survival for individuals who were in utero at the time of the bombing and yet who still were close enough to be exposed to less than or equal to 0.57 Gy, no difference in their cognitive abilities was found, suggesting a threshold dose for pregnancies below which, no life-limiting issues arise. In 50 or so children who survived the gestational process and were exposed to more than this dose, putting them within about 1000 meters from the hypocenter, microcephaly was observed; this is the only elevated birth defect issue observed in the Hibakusha, occurring in approximately 50 in-utero individuals who were situated less than 1000 meters from the bombings.

In a manner dependent on their distance from the hypocenter, in the 1987 Life Span Study, conducted by the Radiation Effects Research Foundation, a statistical excess of 507 cancers, of undefined lethality, were observed in 79,972 hibakusha who had still been living between 1958–1987 and who took part in the study.

An epidemiology study by the RERF estimates that from 1950 to 2000, 46% of leukemia deaths and 11% of solid cancers, of unspecified lethality, could be due to radiation from the bombs, with the statistical excess being estimated at 200 leukemia deaths and 1,700 solid cancers of undeclared lethality.

a b s t r a c t

HIV-stigma is a major reason why HIV continues to be a global epidemic. Interventions targeting HIVstigma are therefore necessary. To find an intervention that is worthwhile, a Cost-Benefit Analysis is needed which compares costs and benefits. There are many documented costs of HIV-stigma. What is missing is a valuation of the benefits of reducing HIV-stigma. The purpose of this paper is to present a general method that can be used to value the benefits of stigma reduction programs. The method involves estimating the marginal rate of substitution (MRS) between stigma and income in the utility function of older people with HIV. To illustrate how our framework can be used, we applied it to a sample of just over 900 people coming from the 2005-06 ROAH study (Research on Older Adults with HIV) in New York City.

What Is Psychological Safety at Work? CCL

<https://www.ccl.org/articles/leading-effectively-articles/what-is-psychological-safety-at-work/>



Why a Psychologically Safe Work Environment Matters & How to Foster It

Research has repeatedly found that organizations benefit from diversity of thought, and groups of people with different life experiences are better able to recognize problems and offer up creative solutions than groups with similar life experiences.

But what if some team members don't feel comfortable speaking up? What if they're afraid to share their concerns or resist asking challenging questions? What if they avoid suggesting innovative ideas because they're worried about rejection?

Unfortunately, many people feel this way about their workplace. According to a 2017 Gallup poll, 3 out of 10 employees strongly agreed that their opinions don't count at work. And remote work settings — which are much more common now, given the global COVID pandemic — has

worsened the problem, particularly for women. A [recent survey from Catalyst](#) found that nearly half of female business leaders face difficulties speaking up in virtual meetings, and 1 in 5 reported feeling overlooked or ignored during video meetings.

The net result? A lack of psychological safety at work, which has real business repercussions.

If you want to learn how to foster an environment of greater psychological safety at work and at home, and you're ready to [take the psychological safety challenge](#), read on!

First, we'll start by defining psychological safety at work.

What Is Psychological Safety at Work?

Psychological safety is the belief that you won't be punished or humiliated for speaking up with ideas, questions, concerns, or mistakes.

What is psychological safety at work in particular?

It's a shared belief held by members of a team that others on the team will not embarrass, reject, or punish you for speaking up.

"When you have psychological safety in the workplace, people feel comfortable being themselves. They bring their full selves to work and feel okay laying all of themselves on the line," Altman says.

The Importance of Psychological Safety at Work

A lack of psychological safety at work has major business repercussions. First, when people don't feel comfortable talking about initiatives that aren't working, the organization isn't equipped to prevent failure. And when employees aren't fully committed, the organization has lost an opportunity to leverage the strengths of all its talent.

"People need to feel comfortable speaking up, asking naïve questions, and disagreeing with the way things are in order to create ideas that make a real difference," says David Altman, our chief operating officer.

"Psychological safety at work doesn't mean that everybody is nice all the time. It means that you embrace the conflict and you speak up, knowing that your team has your back, and you have their backs."

According to Dr. Amy Edmondson, author of *The Fearless Organization: Creating Psychological Safety in the Workplace for Learning, Innovation, and Growth*, people must be allowed to voice half-finished thoughts, ask questions out of left field, and brainstorm out loud in order to create a culture that truly innovates.

The 4 Stages of Psychological Safety

When a team or organizational climate is characterized by interpersonal trust and [a climate of respect](#), members feel free to collaborate and they feel safe taking risks, which ultimately enables them to [implement rapid innovation](#).

A psychologically safe workplace begins with a feeling of belonging. Like Maslow's hierarchy of needs — which shows that all humans require their basic needs to be met before they can

reach their full potential — employees must feel accepted before they're able to improve their organizations.

According to Dr. Timothy Clark, author of *The 4 Stages of Psychological Safety: Defining the Path to Inclusion and Innovation*, employees have to progress through the following 4 stages before they feel free to make valuable contributions and challenge the status quo.

- **Stage 1 – Inclusion Safety:** Inclusion safety satisfies the basic human need to connect and belong. In this stage, you feel safe to be yourself and are accepted for who you are, including your unique attributes and defining characteristics.
- **Stage 2 – Learner Safety:** Learner safety satisfies the need to learn and grow. In this stage, you feel safe to exchange in the learning process, by asking questions, giving and receiving feedback, experimenting, and making mistakes.
- **Stage 3 – Contributor Safety:** Contributor safety satisfies the need to make a difference. You feel safe to use your skills and abilities to make a meaningful contribution.
- **Stage 4 – Challenger Safety:** Challenger safety satisfies the need to make things better. You feel safe to speak up and challenge the status quo when you think there's an opportunity to change or improve.

To help employees move through the 4 stages and ultimately land in a place where they feel comfortable with interpersonal risk-taking, leaders should nurture and promote their team's sense of psychological safety.

How to Create More Psychological Safety at Work

5 Tips for Leaders

Here's how to help create a psychologically safe workplace.



1. Make psychological safety an explicit priority.

Talk about the importance of creating psychological safety at work, connecting it to a higher purpose of promoting greater organizational innovation, team engagement, and a sense of inclusion. Model the behaviors you want to see and set the stage by showing [empathy in the workplace](#).

2. Facilitate everyone speaking up.

Show genuine curiosity, and honor candor and truth-telling. Be open-minded, compassionate, and empathetic when someone is brave enough to say something challenging the status quo. Organizations with a [coaching culture will more likely have team members with the courage to speak the truth](#).

3. Establish norms for how failure is handled.

Don't punish experimentation and (reasonable) risk-taking. Encourage learning from failure and disappointment, and openly share your hard-won lessons learned from mistakes. Doing so will [help encourage innovation, instead of sabotaging it](#).

4. Create space for new ideas (even wild ones).

When challenging an idea, provide the challenge in the larger context of support. Consider whether you only want ideas that have been thoroughly tested, or whether you're willing to accept highly creative, out-of-the-box ideas that are not yet well-formulated. Learn [how to embrace new ideas to foster more innovative mindsets](#) on your team.

5. Embrace productive conflict.

Promote dialogue and productive debate, and work to [resolve conflicts productively](#). Leaders can set the stage for incremental change by establishing team expectations for factors that contribute to psychological safety. With your team, discuss the following questions:

- - *How will team members communicate their concerns about a process that isn't working?*
 - *How can reservations be shared with colleagues in a respectful manner?*
 - *What are our norms for managing conflicting perspectives?*

If all this sounds like a tall order, remember that **psychological safety represents an organization's climate and culture**. And when you consider the enormity of changing a culture, it can feel overwhelming.

But "transformation comes in the form of small steps," Altman notes, and suggests thinking about it in terms of making incremental changes that yield incremental wins.

"Most of us agree we could make a 1% improvement in a goal we have each day," he says. "Ask colleagues if they're willing to sign up for 1% each day. By the end of the year, you're over 30 times better."

You may want to try taking some small, intentional steps to increase psychological safety at work by taking our [7-day psychological safety challenge](#)!

Access Our Webinar!

Watch our webinar, [How Leaders and Leadership Collectives Can Increase Psychological Safety at Work](#), and learn how to promote psychological safety to foster trust, creativity, collaboration, and innovation across your organization.

ACCESS WEBINAR

Team Members Can Help Create More Psychological Safety at Work, Too

While leaders play a role in shaping their team's culture, it's up to each team member to contribute to a psychologically safe climate at work, too.

"A culture is simplistically defined by *'the way we do things around here,'*" says Altman. "We all have a role to play in how we do things at work — both on our team and in our organization."

Team members can take the following steps to promote productive dialog and debate:

- Ask colleagues powerful, open-ended questions, and then [listen actively and intently to understand](#) feelings and values, as well as facts.
- Agree to share failures, recognizing that mistakes are an opportunity to learn and grow.
- Use candor, whether expressing appreciation or disappointment.
- Ask for help, and freely give help when asked.
- Embrace expertise among many, versus a single "hero" mentality.
- [Encourage and express gratitude](#), which reinforces your team members' sense of self.

Most importantly, **positive interactions and conversations between individuals are built on trust**. Give your team members the benefit of the doubt when they take a risk, ask for help, or admit a mistake. In turn, trust that they will do the same for you.

Leaders can also invest in strengthening the quality of dialogue across the organization, from the front desk to the corner office. Quite literally, [better conversations will lead to a better culture](#). Improved conversational skills, combined with a psychologically safe environment, will yield colleagues who are more willing to share unspoken reservations and proposed solutions that are stress-tested more rigorously before implementation.

The work environment is safe for interpersonal risk-taking and the organizational culture becomes more robust, dynamic, and innovative.

Take Action on Psychological Safety at Work



Today's leaders need the ability to address complex challenges in new and innovative ways. Strengthen your organizational culture and help your team **establish a climate of trust and psychological safety at work** using [our research-backed topic modules](#).

Available leadership topics include Collaboration & Teamwork, Communication, Emotional Intelligence & Empathy, Listening to Understand, [Psychological Safety & Trust](#), and more.

LEARN MORE

What Is Psychological Safety at Work — When Work Is Virtual?

At first, it may seem that it's harder to promote psychological safety when employees are not all co-located and many are working remotely. After all, how do you establish trust when interpersonal conversations have to be scheduled in advance and conducted through a screen?

According to Altman, **the work-from-home reality post-pandemic may give team members a unique opportunity to forge connections and increase psychological safety — if they're paying attention.**

"On a virtual call, you have the ability to look intently at people, not just listening to their words, but seeing and feeling their emotions," says Altman, who contrasts a videoconference call with a regular in-person conversation.

"In many cultures, it can be awkward to stare at someone for 30 seconds or certainly minutes at a time. But on Zoom, no one knows who you're looking at, and your ability to apply your emotional intelligence can sometimes be enhanced."

Psychological safety at work requires that team members have the courage to be vulnerable, and virtual work environments also present that opportunity.

"Maybe it's hard for you to express vulnerability in person, but through a computer, you can type more vulnerable statements in chat and spend a little more time thinking through how you want to convey it and gauging the impact on others through their comments in response," Altman suggests. Consider exploring [how to practice authentic communication in a virtual setting through the power of listening](#).

Remember, the goal is to create a psychologically safe work climate where team members *aren't* worried about feeling rejected for speaking up. When that's the case, not only does interpersonal risk-taking become the norm, but team members are also [more adaptable in the face of change](#).

In other words, they understand the challenges and opportunities that exist throughout the organization — and they see *their* role in making it a better place.

Safe and Supported The Intersection of Psychological Safety and Fruitful Risk Practice

By Erin Gloeckner

<https://nonprofitrisk.org/resources/articles/safe-and-supported-the-intersection-of-psychological-safety-and-fruitful-risk-practice/>

Non Profit Risk Management Centre

“My input isn’t valued here.”

“My coworkers always reject my ideas.”

“I feel so stupid around my boss.”

“I have to pick my battles.”

“It will be safer for me if I keep my head down.”

“I wanted to warn them, but I couldn’t risk being ridiculed again.”

“I told them it was dangerous... why didn’t they believe me?”

“If I speak up again, I’ll probably get fired.”

If you have experienced thoughts like these, then you might need *psychological safety*. Defining the concept in her 1999 academic paper, “[Psychological Safety and Learning Behavior in Work Teams](#),” organizational behavioral scientist and Harvard Business School professor Amy Edmondson explained:

“Team psychological safety is defined as a shared belief that the team is safe for interpersonal risk taking...Team psychological safety is not the same as group cohesiveness, as research has shown that cohesiveness can reduce willingness to disagree and challenge others’ views, such as in the phenomenon of groupthink (Janis, 1982), implying a lack of interpersonal risk taking. The term is meant to suggest...a sense of confidence that the team will not embarrass, reject, or punish someone for speaking up. This confidence stems from mutual respect and trust among team members.”

As social beings, most people can acknowledge their innate need to feel accepted, appreciated, or approved of by others. A sense of belonging is potent in work settings where people might derive a sense of identity or community.

Without psychological safety at work, employees are more likely to experience frequent rejection or outcasting. In her Aeon Newsletter essay, "[Rejection Kills](#)," science writer and social entrepreneur Elitsa Dermendzhiyska references various experiments and studies that document how emotional pain can trigger activity in the same brain regions that respond to and regulate physical pain. Social rejection in any context can cause real pain to human beings, and Dermendzhiyska explores how repeated or severe rejection can potentially result in harmful coping strategies such as emotional numbing and reduced empathy towards others.

Combined with typical workplace pressures such as income generation, career success, and unyielding productivity, many workers are already slammed with stress without consciously considering social acceptance. Our needs for social acceptance and connectedness—core facets of our humanity—are rarely adequately addressed in the workplace. However, they remain some of the [most significant drivers](#) of physical and mental health and self-esteem.

How Psychological Safety Benefits Teams and Risk Initiatives

The freedom to express concerns and ideas without fear of retribution sounds like a basic form of respect. Yet, workplace power structures and competing priorities make psychological safety a knotty concept in many organizational cultures. Teams who value mutual respect and intentionally work towards psychological safety will realize tremendous benefits to their team's effectiveness, decision-making, engagement, wellness, and risk management capabilities.

Psychological safety enables teams to:

- Perform more effectively: From 2012 to 2014, Google conducted an internal study, Project Aristotle, to determine what makes a team effective. The study identified five dynamics that consistently and significantly improved the performance of Google teams based on sales and stakeholder assessments. The number one predictor of team effectiveness was [psychological safety](#), followed by dependability, structure and clarity, meaning, and impact. Google researchers also learned that—at least within the context of Google—variables like co-location of teammates, individual performance, extroversion, seniority, tenure, and consensus had little to no impact on team effectiveness.
- Leverage diversity of thought: Widely recognized as a high-performance driver, teams that leverage their diverse perspectives and experiences are better prepared to navigate complex problems, make well-informed decisions, and produce creative solutions. In an environment lacking psychological safety, diverse thoughts are usually guarded, not shared, so everyone misses out.
- Engage authentically: Back in 1990, William Kahn's research on [employee engagement](#) found that a sense of safety (AKA a low risk of adverse consequences) was a critical predictor of an employee's willingness to engage authentically or bring their "full self" to work. If you want full engagement, full

talent, full capacity, or full commitment from workers, you first need to cultivate full psychological safety.

- **Be well:** Frequent or constant worry about self-worth, social standing, job security, or the quality of workplace interpersonal relationships invites heightened stress along with physical and mental health issues. When workers worry about protecting themselves and managing high stress, they are likely to be less productive, effective, and content, or experience feelings of unfulfillment, shame, or resentment.
- **Manage risk:** For any team to practice effective risk management, its members must candidly report and evaluate their concerns, worries, observed dangers, and organizational vulnerabilities. Teams must first reduce the [interpersonal risk of ridicule](#) to create a space where team members can report and discuss risk issues. Recognize that by reporting or speaking up, an employee takes a personal risk to disclose information that could benefit the team, even though that employee might face personal consequences. Reduce the negative impacts and more team members will proactively share pertinent risk information.

To drive home the benefits of psychological safety, let's make it personal. Think back to a time you felt rejected or unappreciated at work. How did it affect you? Did it change the way you interacted with your team in the short or long term? Did it weaken your willingness to contribute? Did it tarnish your self-esteem even for a moment? Did it hurt? Now think of a time you rejected a colleague. How do you think you made them feel?

How Psychological Safety Gets Off Track

In practice, psychological safety is more nuanced than we might first realize. To better understand how people misunderstand psychological safety, we must recognize what it is not.

Psychological safety is not being:

- **Nice:** It's easy to confuse or conflate *niceness* with creating a psychologically safe workplace. After all, when people are nice, they can't be doing any harm, right? Wrong! Being nice is not the same as fostering psychological safety, and in some cases, prioritizing niceness can undermine psychological safety. For example, sometimes people use niceness to manipulate others, conceal dishonesty, or avoid confrontation. Acting nice or abiding by social expectations of warmth and friendliness does not equate with actively creating a psychologically safe environment.
- **Avoidant:** Psychological safety does not ask us to avoid dialogue around sensitive issues. When practiced effectively, it helps us engage in productive dialogue when sensitive topics do arise. Mutual respect and tolerance allow people to explore polarizing or painful issues as a caring and interested community rather than combatants.

- **Harmful:** Going back to Amy Edmondson's description of psychological safety as enabling "interpersonal risk taking," teams must recognize that this concept does not permit individuals to take any risks they want. Effective risk-taking must still benefit the team by contributing to shared progress. Risk-taking is ineffective—and inappropriate—if individuals are using psychological safety to justify harming their teams by doing or saying whatever they want.
- **Comfortable:** Shane Snow, an award-winning journalist and co-founder of Contently [compares psychological safety to exercise](#) to explain how discomfort and growth work together. Snow notes that experts on psychological safety are careful not to confuse the concept with comfort because feeling uncomfortable is not the same as being in danger. No manager or facilitator can promise a completely comfortable environment that also allows for honesty and respectful disagreement. Psychological safety and discomfort go hand-in-hand; it's the underlying safety that ensures that experiencing discomfort can propel personal growth rather than stagnation or regression.
- **Coddling:** While psychological safety does enable vulnerability, it does not coddle people or free people of accountability to reduce the risk of hurting someone else's feelings. According to [LeaderFactor](#), a Utah-based consulting practice, "When our vulnerability is punished, we recoil, retreat, and enter a defensive mode of performance. We enter a mode of self-preservation. We act out of compliance and do the minimum amount necessary to get by....When our vulnerability is rewarded, we engage, contribute meaningfully, and enter an offensive mode of performance. We give of our discretionary effort and spend our time creating value." The simple truth is that people don't respond well to being punished or socially rejected. Human behavior motivations are similar to [dogs](#)—punishment creates a negative effect, whereas [positive reinforcement](#) helps establish trust and enables the dog (or team) to behave desirably.

Cultivating Psychological Safety at Work

Knowing that psychological safety is not necessarily nice or comfortable hints at the reality that making progress can be rather difficult and deeply discomforting. Achieving psychological safety requires individual team members to disrupt biases and humbly question how they themselves might contribute to a *lack* of safety, whether intentionally or inadvertently. Courageous and caring nonprofit teams can test out these ten tactics to begin shaping a culture of psychological safety at work:

1. **Demonstrate and earn trust:** Organizations that achieve psychological safety understand the foundational need to establish trust amongst teams, especially between leaders and their reports. "Look at both leadership trust and psychological safety as two separate but related concepts," asserts [Stuart Taylor](#), CEO of Australian resilience consultancy Springfox. "A high-trust environment will allow staff to think creatively and take risks, but psychological safety means staff understand they will not be punished if something fails or goes wrong. Psychological safety means that, in addition to trust, there is a culture of willingness to experiment, fail, and learn." To achieve psychological safety,

leaders must first demonstrate that they trust their employees and peers. They must also earn the trust of those people, who will then recognize the workplace as a safe space and begin to believe in freedom to speak without fear of retribution. Gustavo Razzetti, CEO of the culture design consultancy Fearless Culture, observes that many companies enact [childish rules](#) and cultural norms that aim to control employees rather than exercise trust in their judgment or competence. Employers are often guilty of knee-jerk reactions to situations, such as restricting everyone with new rules instead of directly addressing the few employees who made bad calls. “Most companies tell people to take risks and break the rules. But, there’s a lot of uncertainty about what the real consequences would be...I always advise my clients to have a ‘mistake policy.’ Don’t just say it’s okay to err. Be explicit that nothing will happen.” Razzetti shares [powerful examples](#) of progressive corporate handbooks and rules that enable employee autonomy rather than employer control. The goal and the result are usually aligned: workers feel trusted and respected, so they naturally strive to use good judgment and uphold corporate values.

2. **Burst your bubble:** Depending on your role, your location in the corporate hierarchy, your personality, and other factors, you might be operating within a psychological bubble of sorts—one that either purposefully protects you from social discomfort or one that inadvertently precludes you from seeing the complete picture. For example, desiring social safety can lead workers to prioritize [self-protection](#) over the duty to actively serve the organization’s mission. On the other end of this extreme, organizational leaders might not realize the vastness of the bubble they reside in by surrounding themselves with executive teams who must balance the sometimes competing priorities of [supporting versus informing](#) their CEOs. Whatever the situation is, individual workers each have the power to peer under the curtain that clouds their capacity to promote or participate in a psychologically safe environment.
3. **Practice productive inquiry and advocacy:** Casual office chit-chat can seem like an excellent way for teams to build interpersonal relationships that strengthen their bond as a team. However, it can also unintentionally build walls between colleagues and foster exclusion. Encourage teams to be mindful of their water-cooler talk. The intensity and quality of conversation can either promote or diminish psychological safety and the capacity to reach informed decisions during team dialogues. By balancing [advocacy and inquiry](#) and ensuring a quality approach to both sides, team members can begin to foster shared learning.
4. **Rein in reactivity:** Many people have past experiences or emotional wounds that, when triggered, invite rising reactivity that might be less about the situation at hand and more about those past experiences. The human brain and body are hardwired to avoid discomfort, harm, and danger, and thus we react and reason predictably when new experiences remind us of old ones. Luckily, we are all capable of disrupting the programming of our brains and our immediate, subconscious reactions to situations we encounter. One approach that has helped many people rein in misdirected reactivity is to discover and deconstruct your personal [Ladder of Inference](#).

5. **Defeat defensiveness:** Defensiveness is a particularly damaging and unproductive type of reactivity because it kicks off an arms race of emotional escalation. When we are defensive, we perceive others as obstacles, and we further anchor ourselves in a desperate need to be right. A conversation between two defensive people will look something like Dr. Seuss's famous story of [The Zax](#), which explores the fate of two stubborn creatures who essentially stop living their lives rather than compromising on their pride. To de-escalate dialogue and defeat defensiveness, learn to identify [defensive routines](#). Also, employ [double-loop learning](#), a simple start to transforming defensive reasoning into productive reasoning.
6. **Appreciate dissent:** To gain the greatest insights from your colleagues, approach every workplace interaction with curiosity and appreciation. Rather than dismissing dissent, try appreciating and considering all input or simply ask for more evidence when a position is weakly supported. Considering a broad range of insights and possibilities will provide you with more information and agility to make the best possible decisions and contingency plans. Maintain [intellectual humility](#) to appreciate dissent better and honor any perspectives that challenge your own. On a related note, learn why people usually [shun the sentinels](#) who try to signal impending doom and vow to battle the [heuristics](#) and cognitive biases that might lead you to rebuke the very person trying to save you.
7. **Make it a "we" thing:** Unless the issue at hand is truly about one individual's harmful habits at work, most uncomfortable conversations reflect the dynamics developing between multiple people or larger teams. When appropriate, focus on "us" or "we" instead of "you" to make words feel less like personal attacks. Everyone involved can consider their personal participation in the problem or toxic dynamic the team is trying to address. In many cases, blame deserves to be shared, and individuals can be spared from direct criticism.
8. **Focus on fortune, not failure:** While it's critical to identify and acknowledge failures, heavy criticism or a deep focus on failure likely produces shame, an [unproductive emotion](#). A cycle of shame yields self-hatred, poor decisions, and more misfortune. Instead, focusing on the *growth opportunities hidden within failure* is like following a treasure map to future fortune. Joyce E. A. Russell, dean, and chief executive of Villanova Business School, [recommends](#) we all reconceptualize failure not as something undesirable to avoid, but as the other side of the coin of success: "know that everything we do will have some elements of success and some elements of failure in it. ...Use failure as feedback. Thomas Edison said, 'I have not failed. I've just found 10,000 ways that won't work.'"
9. **Remedy rejection:** Were you the type of kid that stood up against the school bully? Or noticed when another kid ate alone in the cafeteria during lunch? It's never too late to act on your humanity and simply speak to—or sit with—a coworker who experienced rejection or seems lonely, outcasted, or underappreciated. Feelings of rejection might be healed with words of encouragement, invitations to provide input or collaborate on projects, or with a caring colleague simply witnessing their peer's pain. When you experience rejection at work, follow these [five effective coping mechanisms](#) and consider

practicing [mindfulness](#) to regulate painful feelings better. Also, recognize that loneliness might signal deeper feelings of rejection and exclusion, so scan yourself and others for [indicators of loneliness](#), such as engaging in [negative self-talk](#) and becoming overwhelmed or exhausted during social interactions. To combat loneliness at work, try [five tips](#) suggested by Anne Niederkorn, a writer and IT professional who overcame loneliness at a new job where she didn't quite fit in.

10. **Seek self-awareness:** Many effective avenues to promote psychological safety require individuals to possess some self-awareness and self-control. We are all at risk of managing ourselves from places of fear, control, self-protection, or ego. Acknowledging and stretching our limitations allows us to transcend these very human failings. Interestingly, if you rate yourself as skilled in self-awareness, research shows that you probably are **not** very self-aware. [Research](#) from the team of Tasha Eurich, organizational psychologist and executive coach, explains why people overestimate their self-awareness, fail to introspect correctly, and poorly assess their own leadership effectiveness even as they gain experience and power. If you think you're self-aware, think again, and start walking these [five pathways](#) to improve your self-awareness.

Promoting and participating in a psychologically safe environment requires effort and [emotional intelligence](#). The journey to psychological safety will likely be long and arduous, challenging the identities of individual team members and requiring continuous cultural iteration. When times are tough, don't give up because those tense moments can give way to new realms of psychological safety and shared success.

Additional Resources

De Smet, A., et al. [Psychological Safety and the Critical Role of Leadership Development](#). (February 11, 2021). McKinsey & Company.

Edmondson, A. C., & Mortensen, M. [What Psychological Safety Looks Like in a Hybrid Workplace](#). (April 19, 2021). *Harvard Business Review*.

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https://monoskop.org/images/6/6b/Fanon_Frantz_The_Wretched_of_the_Earth_1963.pdf

The Wretched of the Earth

From Wikipedia, the free encyclopedia

https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/The_Wretched_of_the_Earth

The Wretched of the Earth (French: *Les Damnés de la Terre*) is a 1961 book by the psychiatrist [Frantz Fanon](#), in which the author provides a psychological and psychiatric analysis of the dehumanizing effects of [colonization](#) upon the individual and the nation, and discusses the broader social, cultural, and political implications of establishing a social movement for the [decolonization](#) of a person and of a people. The French-language title derives from the opening lyrics of "[The Internationale](#)".

Summary

Through critiques of [nationalism](#) and of [imperialism](#), Fanon presents a discussion of personal and societal [mental health](#), a discussion of how the use of language (vocabulary) is applied to the establishment of imperialist identities, such as *colonizer* and *colonized*, to teach and psychologically mold the native and the colonist into their respective roles as *slave* and *master* and a discussion of the role of the [intellectual](#) in a [revolution](#). Fanon proposes that revolutionaries should seek the help of the [lumpenproletariat](#) to provide the force required to effect the expulsion of the colonists. In traditional [Marxist theory](#), the lumpenproletariats are the lowest, most degraded stratum of the proletariat—especially criminals, [vagrants](#) and the unemployed—people who lack the [class consciousness](#) to participate in the [anti-colonial](#) revolution.

Fanon applies the term [lumpenproletariat](#) to the colonial subjects who are not involved in industrial production, especially the [peasantry](#), because, unlike the urban proletariat (the working class), the lumpenproletariat has sufficient intellectual independence from the [dominant ideology](#) of the colonial ruling class, ready to grasp that they can revolt against the colonial *status quo* and so decolonize their nation. One of the essays included in *The Wretched of the Earth* is "On National Culture", in which Fanon highlights the necessity for each generation to discover its mission and fight for it.

"On Violence"

The first section is entitled "On Violence". It is a detailed explanation of violence in relation to both the colonial world and the process of decolonization. Fanon begins with the premise that decolonization is, by definition, a violent process without exception. The object of that process is the eventual replacement of one group of humans with another, and that process is only complete when the transition is total. This conception of decolonization is based on Fanon's construction of the colonial world. Through his observations, he concluded that all colonial structures are actually nested societies which are not complementary. He uses [Aristotelian logic](#) in that the colony followed the "principle of reciprocal exclusivity".^[1] Based on this conclusion, Fanon characterizes the assessment of the native population by the settler class as dehumanizing. The settlers literally do not see the natives as members of the same species. The natives are incapable of ethics and thereby are the embodiment of absolute evil (p. 32) as opposed to the Christian settlers who are forces of good. This is a crucial point for Fanon because it explains two phenomena that occur in the colonial world. The first is the idea that decolonization is the replacement of one population by another, and the second is that since the native knows that they are not animals, they immediately develop a feeling of rebellion against the settler.

One of the temporary consequences of colonization that Fanon talks about is division of the native into three groups. The first is the native worker who is valued by the settler for their labor. The second group is what he calls the "colonized intellectual" (p. 47). These are, by western standards, the more educated members of the native group who are in many ways recruited by the settler to be spokespeople for their views. The settlers had "implanted in the minds of the colonized intellectual that the essential qualities remain eternal in spite of the blunders men may make: the essential qualities of the West, of course" (p. 36); these intellectuals were "ready to defend the Graeco-Latin pedestal" (p. 36) against all foes, settler or native. The third group described by Fanon are the [lumpenproletariat](#). This group is described in [Marxism](#) as the poorest class; those who are outside of the system because they have so little. This group is often dismissed by Marxists as unable to assist in the organizing of the workers, but Fanon sees them differently. For him, the lumpenproletariat will be the first to discover violence in the face of the settler (p. 47).

Once the idea of revolution is accepted by the native, Fanon describes the process by which it is debated, adjusted, and finally implemented. According to Fanon, the revolution begins as an idea of total systematic change, and through the actual application to real world situations is watered down until it becomes a small shift of power within the existing system. "[The] pacifists and legalists ... put bluntly enough the demand ... 'Give us more power'" (46), but the "native intellectual has clothed his aggressiveness in his barely veiled desire to assimilate himself to the colonial world" (47). The colonialist bourgeoisie offers non-violence and then compromise as further ways out of the violence of decolonization; these too are mechanisms to blunt and degrade the movement. An example of this is the newly independent [Republic of Gabon](#) which gained independence from France in 1960 and afterward, the new president, [Léon M'ba](#) said "Gabon is independent, but between Gabon and France nothing has changed; everything goes on as before" (quoted in *Wretched of the Earth*, p. 52). For Fanon, this is the perfect example of a decolonization movement which has been enfeebled by the tentativeness of its leaders. To fight this, "The newly independent Third World countries are urged not to emulate the decadent societies of the West (or East), but to chart a new path in defining human and international relationship" (Fairchild, 2010, p. 194).

In this essay Fanon describes many aspects of the violence and response to violence necessary for total decolonization. He also offers cautions about several different approaches to that violence.

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Reception

In his preface to the 1961 edition of *The Wretched of the Earth*, [Jean-Paul Sartre](#) supported Frantz Fanon's advocacy of violence by the colonized people against the colonizer, as necessary for their mental health and political liberation; Sartre later applied that introduction in [Colonialism and Neocolonialism](#) (1964), a politico-philosophic critique of France's Algerian colonialism.^[3] The political focus derives from the first chapter of the book, "On Violence", wherein Fanon indicts colonialism and its [post-colonial](#) legacies, for which violence is a means of [catharsis](#) and liberation from being a colonial subject.

In the foreword to the 2004 edition of *The Wretched of the Earth*, [Homi K. Bhabha](#) criticized Sartre's introduction, stating that it limits the reader's approach to the book to focus on its promotion of violent resistance to oppression.^[4] After 1967, in the wake of Sartre's support for Israel in the [Six-Day War](#), the introduction by Sartre was removed from new editions by Fanon's widow, Josie. Interviewed in 1978 at [Howard University](#), she said, "when Israel declared war on the Arab countries, there was a great pro-Zionist movement in favor of Israel among western (French) intellectuals. Sartre took part in this movement. He signed petitions favoring Israel. I felt that his pro-Zionist attitudes were incompatible with Fanon's work".^[5] Anthony Elliott writes that *The Wretched of the Earth* is a "seminal" work.^[6]

Fanon's writing on culture has inspired much of the contemporary [postcolonial](#) discussions on the role of the national culture in liberation struggles and decolonization. In particular, [Robert J. C. Young](#) partially credits Fanon for inspiring an interest about the way the individual human experience and cultural identity are produced in postcolonial writing.^[7] Fanon's theorizing of national culture as first and foremost a struggle to overthrow colonial rule was a radical departure from other considerations of culture that took a more historical and [ethnographic](#) view.

Criticism

Some theorists working in postcolonial studies have criticized Fanon's commitment to the nation as reflective of an essentialist and authoritarian tendency in his writing.^{[8]:72} In response to "On National Culture", Christopher L. Miller, professor of African American studies and French at Yale University, faults Fanon for viewing the nation as the unquestioned site of anti-colonial resistance, since national borders were imposed on African peoples during the [Scramble for Africa](#).^{[9]:48} According to Miller, the lack of attention to the imposition and artificiality of national borders in Africa overlooks the cultural and linguistic differences of each country that make theorizing a unified national culture, as Fanon does, problematic.^{[9]:48} Miller also criticizes Fanon for following much of "post-Enlightenment Western thought" by treating particular or local histories as subordinate to the universal or global struggle of the nation.^{[9]:50}

Neil Lazarus, professor at Warwick University, has suggested that Fanon's "On National Culture" overemphasizes a sense of unified political consciousness onto the peasantry in their struggle to overthrow colonial systems of power.^{[8]:78} In particular, Lazarus argues that the idea of a 'national consciousness' does not align with the history of the Algerian Revolution, in which Fanon was highly involved, since when the country gained independence in 1962 after an 8-year liberation war, the population was largely demobilized.^{[8]:78} In Lazarus' view, the peasant militancy in Fanon's analysis becomes the exact justification for his theory, yet does not necessarily exist in the material sense.^{[8]:80}

In the foreword to the 2004 edition of *Wretched of the Earth*, [Homi K. Bhabha](#) also pointed to some of the dangers of Fanon's analysis in "On National Culture". He wrote that Fanon's dedication to a national consciousness can be read as a "deeply troubling" demand for cultural homogeneity and the collapse of difference.^{[2]:x} Bhabha, however, suggests Fanon's vision is one of strategy and any focus on the homogeneity of the nation should not be interpreted as "narrow-minded nationalism", but an attempt to break the imposed Cold War era binaries of capitalism vs. socialism or East vs. West.^{[2]:xvi, xvii}

Best to read the book.....

Intersex

<https://www.ensemblemagazine.co.nz/articles/intersex-ama>

Before World Intersex Day (October 26), Angela caught up with Rogena - an intersex person and board member of Intersex Awareness NZ - to discuss what intersex means.

Angela Meyer: There is a lot of misinformation and confusion about what intersex is and isn't. Thanks for taking some time today to bust some myths and for your generosity in sharing your experiences. What prompted you to want to do this AMA?

Rogena Sterling: In 2020 an amendment to the Crimes Act 1961 was passed. It made Female Genital Mutilation illegal - unless you are intersex. This happened despite the intersex advocacy organisation urging for this amendment to include intersex surgeries. It was hugely disappointing as this act has not protected intersex children, especially girls the amendment purported to protect.

AM: What does intersex mean?

RS: [Intersex](#) refers to a person who has sex characteristics (including genitals, gonads and chromosome patterns) that do not fit typical binary notions of male or female bodies. Sometimes people refer to intersex as variations of sex characteristics (VSC) and others use the medical term of differences/disorders of sex development (DSD).

Intersex people make up a wonderfully diverse community that represent as men, women, and non-binary people (people who live beyond the binary of male-female). Intersex folks have varied understandings of, and relationships to, their sex and gender and sexual orientation including being heterosexual). Being intersex is not a gender identity nor a sexual orientation. It is also important to point out because not everyone who is intersex feels like they are "part of the rainbow". Some intersex people also have various disabilities.

AM: How many people are intersex?

RS: Though there are not definite statistics in any country of the world, from some studies of medical literature, we know at least 2.3% of the population are intersex.

AM: Is intersex the same as hermaphrodite?

RS: No. Hermaphroditus was a Greek god who represented a person walking outside of the binary (non-binary as we say today), but unfortunately Western science has colonised the term to mean self-reproducing organism. As such many intersex people find this insulting and derogatory as humans cannot self-reproduce. It is not a term that should be used to refer to intersex people, though some may identify either with the myth or because that was how they were referred to at birth.

AM: How do people know if they are intersex?

RS: Being intersex is not a 'gender identity'. It is a person who has sex characteristics (including genitals, gonads and chromosome patterns) that do not fit typical binary notions of male or female bodies. There are over 30 (possibly 40) variations of sex characteristics that are identified as intersex, though as science understands more, the number of variations increase. A list of variations can be found [here](#).

Though we know there are at least 2.3% of the population who are intersex, the problem is unless people have access to their medical records, and providing that they have been diagnosed as intersex, they will not know that they are intersex. They may recognise that there is something different about themselves, but not that they are intersex. As medical records are only kept for a short period of time, 10 years unless in use, it is useful for parents to keep a copy for their children when they grow up and desire information about their history. This is part of their whakapapa.

AM: What happens to babies?

RS: Our society is based on a male-female (or binary) world, which means every child is assigned a 'gender' at birth. For many people this may be uneventful and match who they are, but for some people it is not so simple.

Intersex people who are identified at birth (some don't find out until their teenage years or later), are assigned a sex/gender, and then if necessary, have surgery and/or medical treatment to ensure their bodies match their assigned 'gender'.

Many parents are not aware of the social construction involved in this process and give their consent believing it is a medical issue and has a medical basis. But gender is not so simple, it is, in fact, an idea of what a boy or girl should be. Choosing a baby's gender when it is not clear, means that there is no self-determination for people who don't fit neatly into a specified gender. This causes much physical, psychological, mental and spiritual suffering that remains with people and becomes more pronounced when people find out the truth and if the person did not desire it becomes a form of torture.

AM: Do they have to have surgery?

RS: Intersex traits in and of themselves are not life-threatening. There are sometimes associated serious medical symptoms, such as with salt-wasting congenital adrenal hyperplasia (SW CAH) and Turner syndrome which may require medical attention. However, these associated health issues do not require a permanent assignment of 'gender' nor the modifying of the child's body to match the assignment of 'gender'. This can wait until the child is of age and has a sense of who they are and consent to it if they desire.

AM: What happens if they have been assigned the wrong gender at birth?

RS: Though for many the assignment of a 'gender' may have resulted in matching who they are, it is not always that way. Assignments are a best guess which are usually based on what people see at birth, but it does not take into account a person's identity development. If a person has been wrongly assigned at birth it can have an impact on a person's life. We do know that transgender and intersex youth have a high rate of attempted suicide or suicide compared to the average population and the mental health issues due to such factors and a lack of acceptance of sex and gender diversity from those around them.

AM: Can they have children?

RS: Fertility is not well studied among intersex people. It differs between variations and even sometimes between people who have the same variations. It would be worth preparing that it is possible that a child with variations may have fertility issues. But, sometimes the infertility has been caused by the medical interventions that the child did not consent to and have rendered the child infertile as an adult.

AM: Do they have to take hormones for the rest of their life?

RS: Not all intersex people who have had medical interventions require hormones, but those who do will usually have to take them for most of their life.

AM: Do women go through menopause?

RS: Some intersex people go through menopause and sometimes this occurs at a younger age than the average person.

AM: What happens at puberty?

RS: As most people know, puberty is an age when another major development stage occurs. For many intersex people though, as their bodies are different to the 'majority of teenagers', it becomes a hugely stressful time full of anxiety. It is a stage where some intersex people find their body is not changing as others in their assigned 'gender' and go to the doctor to find out why. At this point they are told they have a certain 'medical condition' but they are not usually told they are intersex. As you can imagine for a teenager, they feel lonely thinking that they are the only one in the world (unless they are introduced to a support group such as [ITANZ](#)).

AM: What is the best thing to do if your child is intersex?

RS: The first thing to do is love them. The second thing is to support them. And guide them with an open mind. Find [support](#) for yourself for the well-being of the child and the family and the well-being of both. Research shows that children who grow up in a supportive environment have a higher chance of improved well-being in all areas of their life. Lastly, be aware that though your child may have been assigned a 'gender', they may identify differently to their assigned 'gender'.

AM: Why is it a big deal?

RS: It is a big deal because intersex people face shame, discrimination, and at the extreme, torture. Some are killed for who they are, even today. The harm is simply a result of who they are and society not accepting diversity.

Though there is a lot of talk about sex/gender diversity, it is based on being equal as male or female. These very notions have led to 1000 years of violence, discrimination and even murder of intersex people to maintain the binary division of male and female.

On October 1, the UN made a [statement](#) explaining the issues that intersex people face:

The Vienna Declaration states that human rights are universal, indivisible, interdependent and interrelated. The VDPA makes clear that "every person is born equal and has the same rights to life and welfare, education and work, living independently and active participation in all aspects of society". However, intersex people - that is, individuals who are born with sex characteristics that do not fit the typical definition of male or female bodies - continue to face serious and widespread human rights violations and abuses.

In many countries around the world, intersex people are subjected to medically unnecessary surgeries, hormonal treatments and other procedures in an attempt to change their appearance to be in line with gendered societal expectations of male and female bodies without their full and informed consent.

Intersex persons are often denied full access to their medical records.

...

Throughout their lives, people with diverse sex characteristics face discrimination in all areas of life, such as access to education, health, employment and sports, among others, as well as restrictions on the exercise of legal capacity and in access to remedies and justice.

We call on governments as a matter of urgency, to protect the autonomy of intersex adults and children and their rights to health, and to physical and mental integrity so that they live free from violence and harmful practices.

Governments should investigate human rights violations and abuses against intersex people, ensure accountability, reverse discriminatory laws and provide victims with access to remedy.

New Zealand still has very few protections for intersex people and they still face many of these issues even today.

AM: What can people do to be more accommodating?

RS: The following are some ways to remember to be more accommodating to the diversity of human including intersex people:

- Begin with the premise we are human being like everyone else
- When someone is different to the norm (different to male or female whether identity or bodily difference), include them to make a new normal
- Accept that sex comes in many forms and that differences are not abnormalities but expressions of humanity
- When designing regulations and policy in government or organisations ensure that it is not restricted to a binary of male-female and that diversity is provided for.
- When you hear someone restricting diversity to male and female, remind them it is not that simple and humanity is wonderfully diverse.
- When you hear someone being harassed or bullied because their sex or gender is outside of the norm, stand up for them.
- Be supportive, find resources and educate yourselves as to what intersex is (that is the purpose of these questions) and make sure we are included however we identify.

Individual Responsibility versus Social System Wide Acceptance of Responsibility?

Responsibility versus Organisational Levels

COMMENT: In the story below, all "blame" is heaped onto one junior prison guard and he is to be charged. But any issues about higher ranking staff being partly or completely responsible are swept under the carpet.

Female inmates terrorised by male inmates in US jail

28 Jul, 2022 02:02 PM3 minutes to read

<https://www.nzherald.co.nz/world/female-inmates-terrorised-by-male-inmates-in-us-jail/5RGKROY4GFKSDLVPiXRYVH57KM/?dicbo=v2-ad1af62a771df1237b9931efa8819e4d&&ref=topbox>

NZ Herald

WARNING: This story discusses allegations of sexual abuse and may be upsetting.

Female inmates in the US faced a "night of terror" after a corrupt guard took bribes to allow male inmates to enter their cells, leading to horrific sexual assaults and rape.

Corrections officer David Lowe, 29, has been fired and charged after the attacks at Clark County Jail in Indiana last October.

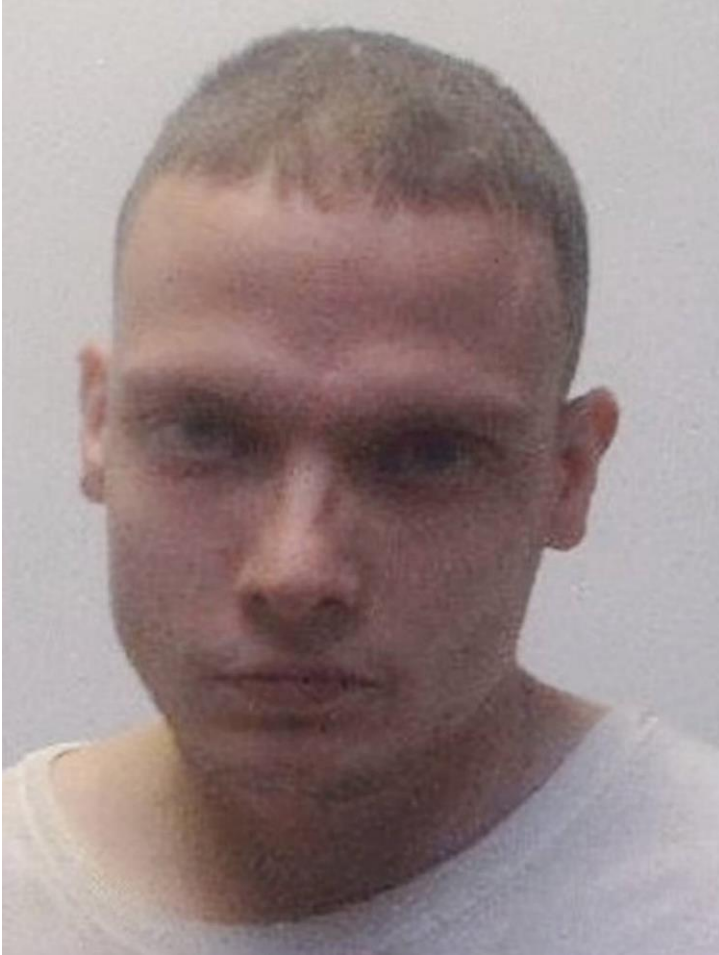
A series of lawsuits have been filed, alleging that Lowe took bribes of US\$1000 (\$1597) to give keys for the female housing pod to male inmates for several hours.

At least two of the 28 women say they were raped, and others say they were sexually assaulted, harassed and intimidated.

The men reportedly wrapped towels around their heads to hide their faces during the attacks, threatening the women with violence if they tried to summon help.

The lawsuits state the men repeatedly shouted about how long they had been without sexual contact as they went about the attacks.

They further claim that no other officers stepped in to stop the attacks, which left the women with significant injuries and sexually transmitted infections.



Former corrections officer David Lowe has been charged over the incident. Photo / Clark County Sheriff's Department

Instead of offering assistance, the initial response of corrections officers was to leave the lights on in the female housing pod for three days and nights straight.

The lawsuits also name Sheriff Jamey Noelas a defendant and say he failed to properly supervise and train the staff.

Read More

- [Leaked footage reveals prisoners' horrific rape and ...](#)
- [Prison rape trial: Why was young inmate double bunked ...](#)
- [US Marshals offer \\$15,000 reward for information about ...](#)
- [Arrest warrant issued for missing Alabama prison guard ...](#)

Clark County Sheriff's office placed the blame squarely on Lowe in a statement to the Daily Mail, saying that the attacks were "the result of the unforeseeable criminal actions of a rogue corrections officer".

"The individual in question chose to abandon his training, ethics and morals and made the unilateral decision to mortgage his career and future by allowing inmate access to the jail keys," they said.

They also suggested that the claims in the suit were exaggerated, saying their investigation showed collusion between inmates to invent elements of the lawsuits.

"The sheriff's detective division has continued to interview female inmates who were present in the pod that evening and these interviews have yielded information that is in direct opposition to the allegations made in the civil suit." the department said.

"Further the investigation seems to indicate that there was a systemic plan by individuals who were incarcerated that evening to develop the narrative that makes up the crux of the claims in the civil case."

SEXUAL HARM - DO YOU NEED HELP?

If it's an emergency and you feel that you or someone else is at risk, call 111.

If you've ever experienced sexual assault or abuse and need to talk to someone contact the Safe to Talk confidential crisis helpline on:

- Text 4334 and they will respond
- Email support@safetotalk.nz
- Visit <https://safetotalk.nz/contact-us/> for an online chat

Alternatively contact your [local police station](#) - click here for a list.

If you have been abused, remember it's not your fault.

Prison rape trial: Why was young inmate double bunked with violent rapist?

14 Nov, 2020 09:18 AM

<https://www.nzherald.co.nz/nz/prison-rape-trial-why-was-young-inmate-double-bunked-with-violent-rapist/GO7KEFBWEFR6AIL62TOEOBCYMY/?ref=readmore>



Benjamin Goundar will be sentenced in February. Photo / Melissa Nightingale



By

Melissa Nightingale

Reporter

Content warning: This article references sexual assault and violence. Helplines can be found at the bottom of the page.

"Power, domination, and control."

These were the three words Crown prosecutor Jamie O'Sullivan used to sum up a week-long case detailing the shocking abuse a young prisoner suffered at the hands of his cellmate.

It's a pattern that was first demonstrated in 2011, when Benjamin Goundar abducted a 15-year-old girl off a Hamilton street and subjected her to hours of sexual torture.

Read More

- [Prison rape trial: Benjamin Goundar found guilty of raping cellmate - NZ Herald](#)
- [Prison rape trial: Defendant Benjamin Goundar had history of violent rape - NZ Herald](#)
- [Benjamin Goundar on trial in Wellington for alleged prison rape - NZ Herald](#)
- [Prison rape trial: Benjamin Goundar's lawyer demands 'show us the shank' - NZ Herald](#)

In 2017, the pattern reared its ugly head again in a tiny cell in Upper Hutt's Rimutaka Prison.

But why was it allowed to happen?

Corrections has remained close-lipped on how staff decided it was okay to put an 18-year-old prisoner in a cell with a violent sexual offender.

How a vulnerable, teenage prisoner fell under the control of a violent sexual predator

When Goundar's victim arrived in the unit, he knew no-one, had no support, and was working to navigate his new reality.

The court has not revealed what he was in prison for, but the victim said during the trial this week he had been "in denial" about his own offending at the time.

Barely a man, he was the youngest person in the unit at just 18.

He said Goundar told him he was in jail for drug offending, and the older man persuaded him to request a transfer to his cell with the promises of movies, food, and a friendly face.

It only took until the first night for that friendly mask to drop.

The first two evenings, the victim said he was hit and slapped around the head and body for refusing to give Goundar sexual favours. By the third evening he was so beaten down, he was forced to give in to Goundar's demands for oral sex.

From there, the degrading activities continued nearly every night for two and a half months, with regular beatings from Goundar to keep his victim submissive.

The abuse escalated, with Goundar raping the victim multiple times and at times threatening to kill him if he told anyone or tried to move to a different cell. On one occasion he produced a shank, which looked to be made from a piece of plastic cutlery.

The victim, terrified for his life, held his tongue. Despite the pain he was suffering from the rapes, he avoided seeking medical treatment for fear someone would put two and two together, and Goundar would seek revenge for being exposed.

He was convinced Goundar would find a way to hurt or kill him if the truth came out. Even if the older man was moved to another prison, he could send a letter through the prison mail system to his friends in the unit and they could harm the victim on Goundar's behalf, he believed.

There was a window to the cell for guards to look through on their rounds, but Goundar kept it covered with a blanket or sheet of some type.

The abuse only stopped when a mystery caller contacted Crimestoppers, an anonymous tip-off service, threatening violence against Goundar for his attacks on the victim. Everyone involved in the trial including the victim said they did not know who placed the call.

Goundar was moved out of the unit, but even then the victim was too scared to speak to police when approached.

It wasn't until six months later, when news of the abuse had spread through the unit and the victim's fellow inmates had assured him they would not let him be harmed, that he wrote a letter to police about what he had endured.

In his evidential video interview with police, the victim told officers he was still afraid of retribution for speaking to them.

Why was an 18-year-old placed in a cell with an aggressive child sex offender?

It's unclear how thoroughly Corrections assessed the compatibility of the two prisoners before allowing the younger man's move to the cell.

Corrections uses a system called the Shared Accommodation Cell Risk Assessment, or Sacra, to reduce the level of risk prisoners pose to each other when placed in shared accommodation cells.

Staff should assess the usual things such as gang affiliations, health needs and risk of violence towards others.

The list also factors in the prisoners' previous behaviour and history, the nature of their offending, and their risk of sexual assault against others.

At the 2013 sentencing for his earlier offending, Goundar was assessed as being at a high risk of reoffending.

Corrections chief custodial officer Neal Beales today told the Herald a sexual conviction did not necessarily preclude a prisoner from being double bunked.

"While a prisoner's previous convictions are considered during the assessment process, there are a multitude of other factors that are relevant," he said in a statement.

"However, staff are directed to consider sexual predation when considering suitability for a shared cell and no prisoner who poses a detectable threat to another prisoner will be double-bunked."

Beales would not comment on how Goundar's case was assessed, citing legislative obligations under the Privacy Act 1993 and the Official Information Act 1982. He also would not say whether Corrections would be providing compensation to the victim.

He expressed his "deepest apologies" to the victim.

"No one, no matter who they are, deserves to have endured what he had to endure at the hands of Mr Goundar, whether they be in prison or not. We know the outcome of the court case this week will do little to erase what has happened, but we do hope it is at least a step towards helping him move on."

A spokesman for Corrections Minister Kelvin Davis said it was the minister's "strong expectation" that Corrections "does everything possible to keep people safe while they're in prison".

He declined to comment further while the matter was still before the courts.

Red flags

In assessing Goundar's suitability for double bunking, Corrections could have looked at the facts of his 2011 offending.

The incident bears concerning similarities to what he would go on to do to his cellmate.

In both cases, Goundar targeted a young, vulnerable victim by initially presenting a friendly face.

He then isolated his victims - in the first case by driving them to a secluded area, and in the second case by getting him alone in a cell after lockup.

Goundar then demanded oral sex, and when he did not get his way he resorted to hitting his victims around the head until they complied. Both cases escalated to rape, and involved threats to kill the victims if they did not submit to him.

Where to from here for Benjamin Goundar?

Goundar, who is still in prison for the original offending, will be sentenced for the latest offending in February next year.

The jury of eight men and four women yesterday found him guilty on nine charges, including common assault, sexual violation, and threatening to kill.

He was already serving a 16-year prison sentence for the 2011 offending, but may now be a candidate for preventive detention.

This sentence is similar to life in prison, in that it is an indefinite sentence while allows an offender to be kept in jail for as long as they are considered a risk to society. They can also be recalled to prison at any time.

O'Sullivan yesterday asked Justice Karen Clark to order a report into whether Goundar would be eligible for such a sentence.

Where to get help:

- If it's an emergency and you feel that you or someone else is at risk, call 111.
- If you've ever experienced sexual assault or abuse and need to talk to someone call the confidential crisis helpline [Safe to Talk](#) on: 0800 044 334 or text 4334. (available 24/7)
- [Male Survivors Aotearoa](#) offers a range of confidential support at centres across New Zealand - [find your closest one here.](#)
- [Mosaic - Tiaki Tangata](#): 0800 94 22 94 (available 11am - 8pm)
- If you have been abused, remember it's not your fault.
- [Wellington HELP](#) has a 24/7 helpline for people who need to speak to someone immediately. You can call 04 801 6655 and push 0 at the menu.

Pike River mine disaster: Lawyer for families now confident manslaughter prosecution will be pursued by police

10 Mar, 2022 09:25 AM 6 minutes to read

<https://www.nzherald.co.nz/nz/pike-river-mine-disaster-lawyer-for-families-now-confident-manslaughter-prosecution-will-be-pursued-by-police/2ITHWLW77SNX3GMNZUJCB6BJLQ/>

Focus Live: Human remains discovered at Pike River mine



By

Kurt Bayer

Multimedia Journalist

The lawyer for Pike River families is now confident that police have gathered enough evidence to pursue a manslaughter prosecution against mine bosses, more than a decade after the disaster.

Police yesterday confirmed that a criminal probe is ongoing while final images taken during a borehole drilling project captured evidence of further human remains deep inside the West Coast coalmine that exploded on November 19, 2010 and killed 29 men.

The families' lawyer Nigel Hampton QC told RNZ's Morning Report today that the police's "quite rigorous and disciplined" investigation has given him confidence that they're on track.

"I think it's all done with a view to excluding certain conjecturable causes – what might be seen as causes of this explosion," he said.

Nine years ago, police reached a view that they had sufficient evidence of gross negligence to bring a case of criminal nuisance against certain management, if not the directorship of the Pike River mine, Hampton said, in terms of the setting up and running of the mine.

The "missing piece" was the cause of the explosion that resulted in so many deaths, Hampton said.

"The process that's been gone through in the last three years or so has really been to eliminate, I believe, conjectural causes and come back to a proposition that there is no other plausible explanation but that this explosion was caused directly as a direct result of the gross management/directorship of the mine," Hampton told RNZ.



Nigel Hampton QC. Photo / File

Technology has improved over last decade to provide clearer and more detailed images and the evidence obtained by police has now given Hampton confidence to tell families that they are finally on course to "consider that there will be a prosecution for manslaughter taken".

Asked if he was concerned over the length of time it's taken to reach this point, Hampton responded: "I would rather they took time and do it methodically, thoroughly, and hopefully foolproofly. So, time, in that sense, is not a factor against what is occurring – it's in favour in terms of the solidity of the investigation."

Families of the 29 men who died in the Pike River disaster were yesterday told that the latest images taken inside the mine have been reviewed by pathologists and show two sets of human remains.

Police say that one of those images was identified as human remains - and the families were told - back in early 2011.

The images were taken in the roadway leading to the Goaf area where it is believed that three men had been working.



Detective Superintendent Peter Read at November's press conference in Christchurch announcing bodies had been found at Pike River. Photo / George Heard

The discovery means that eight sets of human remains have now been captured in imaging taken during borehole drilling.

"As I've noted previously, the search for answers over the last 11 years has been a long and painful journey for the families of the 29 men lost at the mine," said Detective Superintendent Peter Read yesterday.

"While the discovery of these eight sets of remains is significant, I'm very aware that it still leaves many unanswered questions for the men's loved ones, and my thoughts are with all of the families today."

The redrilling of the borehole brings to an end the borehole drilling operation, which started in early 2019.

The drilling operation has given police "valuable information to inform our investigation" into the underground activity that led to the first explosion, Read said.

"On behalf of NZ Police, I would like to extend my sincere thanks all those who worked on and supported the drilling operation, including Pike River Recovery Agency staff, and other drilling and mining experts," he said.

While the drilling operation has concluded, police yesterday confirmed that work on the criminal investigation is ongoing.

Some of the Pike River families say the discovery is emotional but will help with closure for many.

Anna Osborne, whose husband Milton died in the disaster, said although the find was not a surprise, it is still hard.

"We've known for a long time there was at least one of our men under borehole 47, but that doesn't make coming back to it any easier," she said.

"What is giving us some comfort is that now, as we get to the end of the project and the mine is sealed, we're getting real answers about what had happened there."

Read More

- [Pike River disaster: Evidence of further human remains ...](#)
- [Pike River mine tragedy: Bodies found nearly 11 years ...](#)
- [Pike River: Bernie Monk: - 'I am just so frustrated ...](#)
- [Pike River coal mine re-entry to try to recover 29 ...](#)
- [Law Society considers probe into 'unlawful' deal with ...](#)

Minister Responsible for Pike River Re-entry Andrew Little, in November, would not be drawn on whether a prosecution was imminent with the police investigation ongoing.

The Pike River Recovery Agency (PRRA) completed its \$50m re-entry of the mine's access tunnel to try and recover remains and find any forensic clues last year.

It had been due to permanently seal the mine while police were partway through their borehole investigations.



Pike River Mine family members Anna Osborne, left, and Sonya Rockhouse are among those still pushing for a criminal prosecution. Photo / NZME

But some Pike River families who lost loved ones, and had fought for years to try and get authorities to try and find their bodies, launched legal action to try and stop it from happening.

On Friday, November 19, 2010, about 3.44pm, an explosion ripped through the Pike River underground coal mine, followed by subsequent explosions. Two men made it out alive but another 29 were unaccounted for.

The Royal Commission on the Pike River Coal Mine tragedy found that the "immediate cause of the first explosion was the ignition of a substantial volume of methane gas", but could only speculate on what might have triggered ignition.

"The mine was new and the owner, Pike River Coal Ltd (Pike), had not completed the systems and infrastructure necessary to safely produce coal. Its health and safety systems were inadequate," the commission's report said.

WorkSafe laid charges against former Pike River boss Peter Whittall in 2013, but the case was dropped after a \$3.4 million settlement was paid – a deal the Supreme Court later said was unlawful.

The money was split between the two survivors and the families of the 29 missing, a total of \$110,000 for each man who had been down the mine that day

Australian company VLI Drilling, which employed three of the men who died, also pleaded guilty to health and safety charges and was fined \$46,800.

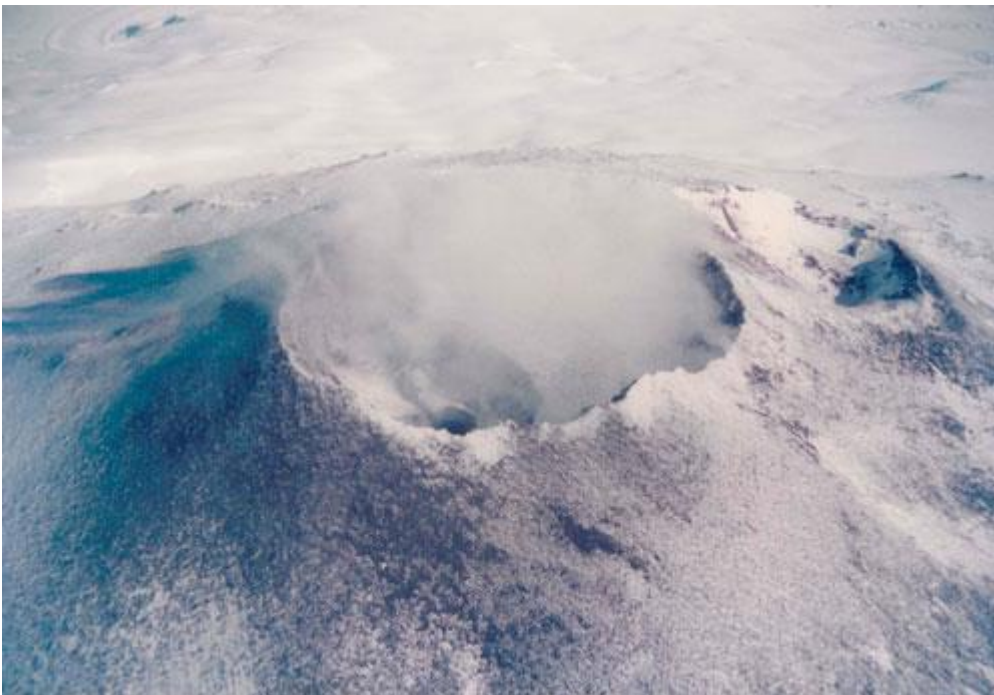
The Mount Erebus Disaster

<https://fearoflanding.com/history/the-mount-erebus-disaster/>

20 Aug 21 21 Comments

On the 28th of November 1979, a sight-seeing flight to Antarctica crashed into Mount Erebus, killing all 257 on board. The Mount Erebus Disaster, as it came to be known, is famous not just for the tragic accident, New Zealand's worst peacetime disaster, but also because the final accident report's conclusion was overturned within a year.

Air New Zealand flight 901 was an all-day sight-seeing trip departing Auckland at 08:00 and then landing at Christchurch at 19:00 for refuelling before returning the passengers to Auckland at 21:00, 13 hours after departure. The flight included an experienced Antarctic guide to explain the sights over the public address system. Sir Edmund Hillary had been a guide on previous flights and had been scheduled for the 28th of November flight but cancelled in favour of a speaking tour in the US. Hillary's friend Peter Mulgrew, a New Zealand mountaineer and yachtsman, filled in for Hillary as the commentator for the flight.



Erebus crater view from above in 1983. Photograph by Howard North

The passengers were offered a champagne breakfast and three films about the Antarctic as they made their way south. The flight was due to arrive over Antarctica shortly after noon NZST.

Neither of the pilots had ever flown to Antarctica before and the flight engineer had only been there once. The flight descended over McMurdo Sound for a view of Mount Erebus and McMurdo Station. These sight-seeing flights regularly descended below the minimum safe altitude of 16,000 feet so that the passengers could gain a better view and take photographs.

Air Traffic Control at McMurdo Station (Mac Centre) was aware of this and the controller advised the flight that once the flight was within radar range, about 40 miles (65 km) from the station, the flight could descend safely down to 1,500 feet using the radar controlled let-down service. The crew reported in at 43 miles from the station and asked for approval to descend further, confirming that they had clear visibility. The controller approved this and asked the flight crew to keep Mac Centre advised of their altitude. The crew reported at 13,000 feet and at 10,000 feet.

The controller asked if they still needed the radar-controlled let-down below 10,000 feet through the cloud. The crew replied that they were clear of cloud and happy to proceed visually to McMurdo Station.

However, the flight plan had been changed before the flight to fix a mistake in the earlier route. No one had informed the flight crew of the change and ATC were not aware. As a result of being on a different route, the aircraft never appeared on the controller's radar.

The flight crew reported at 6,000 feet and reported that they were still visual and descending to 2,000 feet. They still believed they were flying west of Mount Erebus and were safely over water when they crashed into the mountain.



Erebus crash trail in snow. Photograph by R B Thomson, courtesy of the Antarctica NZ Pictorial Collection: HR87

The DC-10 was not understood to be lost until hours later, when flight 901 failed to arrive at Christchurch. The search and rescue teams were initially searching the assumed flight path for hours. Finally at midnight, a US Navy Lockheed LC-130 Hercules spotted the wreckage on Mount Erebus. The weather was too poor for a landing but another helicopter circled the wreckage to confirm the Air New Zealand logo on the tail and that there was no sign of survivors.

The following morning, three mountaineers were lowered onto the Mount Erebus slope from a US Navy UH-1N helicopter. They confirmed that all passengers and crew had been killed in the impact. Recovery and investigation parties were taken to the site in a Royal New Zealand Air Force C-130. The mountaineers returned to the crash site where they erected polar tents and left caches of food and equipment for the parties.

A helicopter pad was established and the longer task of recovering bodies and personal belongings was begun. The site was laid out into a grid system for a detailed accounting of the wreckage. The investigations team were able to retrieve both the cockpit voice recorder and the flight data recorder with the support of mountaineer support from the Face Rescue Squad.



Helicopter dropping off the timber at campsite of the recovery operation, taken by the New Zealand Police Department

The final report now known as the “Chippindale Report” after chief investigator Ron Chippindale, was released in May 1980.

This final report acknowledged the change in flight plan but concluded that the principal cause of the crash was pilot error, specifically:

The decision of the Captain to continue the flight at low level toward an area of poor surface and horizon definition when the crew was not certain of their position.

The government had already decided to hold an inquiry in March, two months before Chippindale had completed his report. Despite this, they made the report public in June, leading to headlines blaming the incompetent crew for the deaths of the sight-seeing passengers. At the same time, it had become public knowledge that the flight coordinates had been altered without the crew’s knowledge. The airline countered that if the pilots had remained above the minimum safe altitude set for the flight, the plane would never have crashed.

One damning point was that the report did not stick to the official cockpit voice recorder transcript, which had been transcribed by CVR specialists with support from the NTSB. Instead, the report consistently referred to an unofficial transcript from the cockpit voice recorder, in which ambiguous and hard-to-decipher interactions were replaced by specific statements, all of which supported the conclusion of the report.

The differences included a key phrase of “Bit thick here, eh Bert?” which the report referred to as showing that they were flying in cloud, as opposed to the CVR specialists who believed that the flight crew member said “This is Cape Bird” as he recognised a landmark out the window. The audio was not clear enough to be sure and on the official transcripts it was marked as unintelligible. However, in the final report, the transcript quotes the flight engineer as saying “Bit thick here, eh Bert” as a fact, with no reference to the audio difficulties or differing interpretations.

Also, there was no one who went by the name “Bert” on the flight deck.



DC-10 wreckage taken by G. Varcoe, courtesy of the Antarctica NZ Pictorial Collection: HSR34

On the 7th of July, a Royal Commission of Inquiry began to examine every detail of the accident, which provided much new insight both into the crash and the investigation. This report is known as the Mahon Report, after Hon. Justice Peter Mahon who presided over the inquiry with the support of two barristers. He was given a number of points to investigate, including whether any “culpable act” had directly led to the disaster.

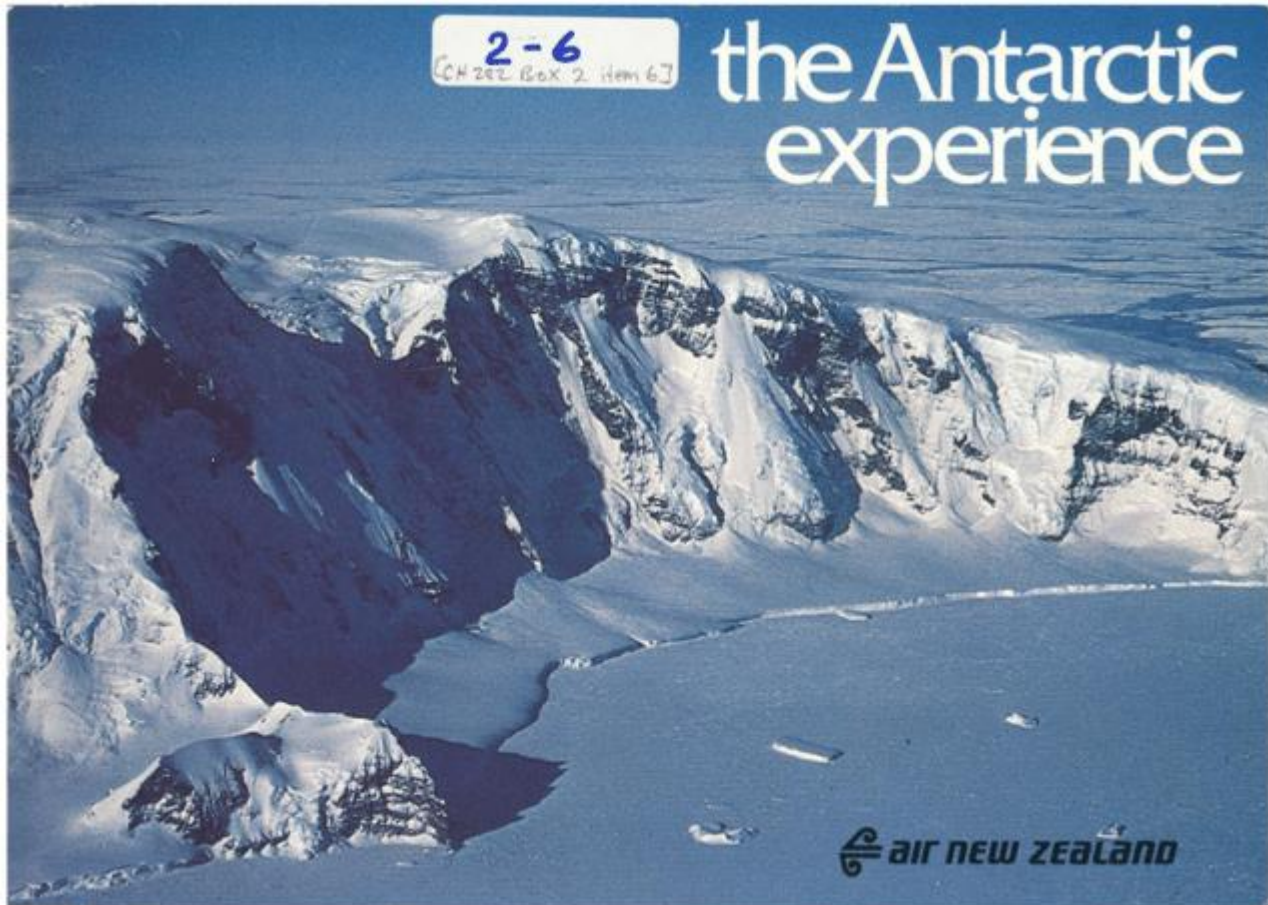
Judge Mahon did not have an aviation background but he went to great lengths to understand the key issues of the flight, including the navigation system for the DC-10 and the process of creating a transcript from a cockpit voice recorder.

His shocking conclusion was that the airline had decided in advance that the cause of the accident must be attributed to pilot error.

The palpably false sections of evidence which I heard could not have been the result of mistake, or faulty recollection. They originated, I am compelled to say, in a pre-determined plan of deception. They were very clearly part of an attempt to conceal a series of disastrous administrative blunders and so... I am forced reluctantly to say that I had to listen to an orchestrated litany of lies.

He was less harsh about Chief Inspector Chippindale but nevertheless dismisses his findings as untenable. He also educated himself about the illusion known as “whiteout”, a circumstance which had not been investigated in the original report. The Mahon Report included in-depth explanations of all of these components so that the detailed analysis is also extremely accessible, even without aviation experience.

Although Chippindale concluded that the principal cause of the crash was the flight crew’s decision to fly beneath the minimum safe altitude, Judge Mahon showed that this was routine for these sight seeing flights and indeed, the promotional brochure showed photographs which were clearly taken from below the minimum safe altitude.

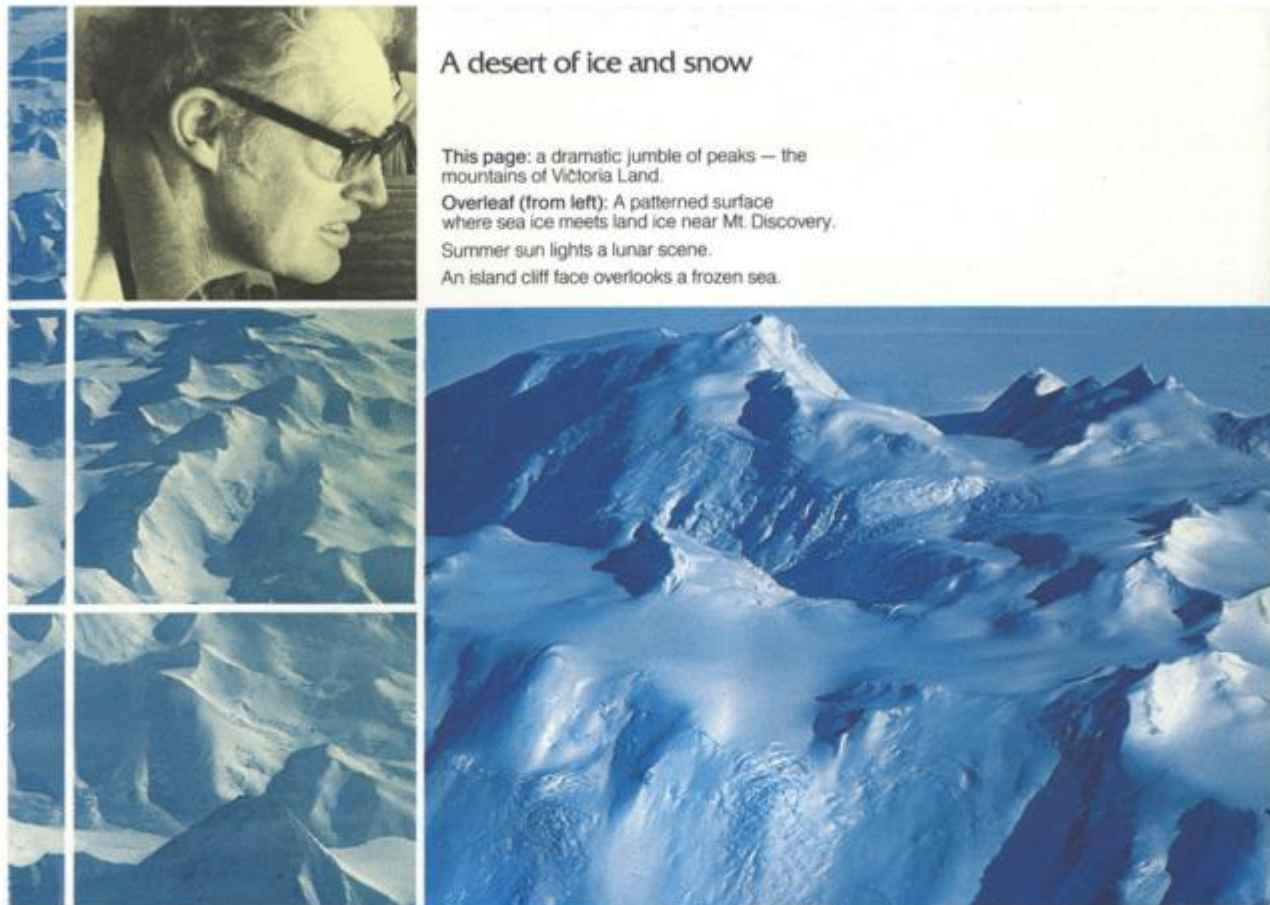


The Antarctic experience, Air New Zealand's promotional booklet, courtesy of Manatū Taonga

Judge Mahon concluded that the crash of Air New Zealand flight 901 was down to ten separate issues, where removing any single one would have avoided disaster.

Of these ten contributing causes, he determined that only two of them were the result of a culpable act or omission.

1. There was not supplied to Captain Collins, either in the RCU briefing or on the morning of the flight, any topographical map upon which had been drawn the track along which the computer system would navigate the aircraft.
2. Neither Captain Collins nor any other member of his crew was told of the alteration which had been made to the computer track.



A page from the brochure offering the Antarctic experience.

He believed that the principal cause was Air New Zealand's decision to change the flight plan waypoint coordinates without advising the crew. This new flight plan took the aircraft directly over the mountain rather than alongside it. The crew believed that they could descend safely based on the track that they believed they were following. In addition, weather conditions most likely lead to whiteout conditions, which meant that there were no navigational references visible to the flight crew. Although they were in clear weather, they were unable to see the mountain, even when it was directly in front of them.

The dominant cause of the disaster was the act of the airline in changing the computer track of the aircraft without telling the aircrew. That blend of act and omission acquires its status as the "dominant" cause because it was the one factor which continued to operate from the time before the aircraft left New Zealand until the time when it struck the slopes of Mt. Erebus. It is clear that this dominant factor would still not have resulted in disaster had it not been for the coincidental occurrence of the whiteout phenomenon. But the conditions of visual illusion existing in Lewis Bay would have had no effect on flight TE 901 had the nav track of the aircraft not been changed, for it was only the alteration to the nav track which brought the aircraft into Lewis Bay instead of McMurdo Sound.

In my opinion therefore, the single dominant and effective cause of the disaster was the mistake made by those airline officials who programmed the aircraft to fly directly at Mt. Erebus and omitted to tell the aircrew. That mistake is directly attributable, not so much to the persons who made it, but to the incompetent administrative airline procedures which made the mistake possible.

The Mahon Report, with its emphases on detail and understanding technical aspects, changed the way we look at risk management and organisational failures. He paved the way for investigations to insist on taking on the complex issues rather than allowing an investigation to quickly settle on an easy answer and look for evidence to back it up.

The [Erebus: The Loss of TE901](#) website is a fantastic resource that goes over the accident and both reports, along with the context in which they were written. I highly recommend taking a few hours to go over the rich collection of information and explanations that has been collected there.

In perspective: Peter Mahon

[Article posted by Cobalt Recruitment](#)

<https://www.cobaltrecruitment.co.nz/blog/2018/03/in-perspective-peter-mahon>

Peter Mahon became the most famous judge in New Zealand when he accused Air New Zealand of an “orchestrated litany of lies”. His condemnation of the airline for the Erebus disaster won him appraisal from many, but also strong criticism. The tragedy occurred on 28th November 1979, when a tourist jet crashed into Mt. Erebus, killing 257 passengers and crew on board. The crash is New Zealand’s deadliest peacetime disaster, and public outcry led to Mahon’s inquiry.

Long before Mahon became a renowned trial attorney, he served in 2nd New Zealand Expeditionary Force as a second lieutenant. He spent two years in the military, returning from the war in 1946. He began his legal career when he joined Raymond, Donnelly & Co. It was here he learned the trade and was mentored by Sir Arthur Donnelly. Mahon’s first major trial was the Parker-Hulme murder case in 1954, where he was a junior counsel for the prosecution.

On 7th July 1980, a Royal Commission of Inquiry into the Erebus disaster began. This would become the most significant case in Mahon’s career. Mahon was given the job to determine whether any “culpable act” had caused the disaster, but controversy soon arose when he cleared the pilots of any negligence. The nation had blamed air flight captain Jim Collins for the crash, but Mahon disagreed.

In his 1981 report, he pointed the finger at Air New Zealand. He decided that they had fed the wrong flight path into the aircraft’s navigation system, aiming it directly into the mountain. The pilots had not been notified of the mistake. Mahon [said in his report](#), “the single dominant and effective cause of the disaster was the mistake made by those airline officials who programmed the aircraft to fly directly at Mt Erebus...”. Mahon went onto controversially accuse the Air New Zealand of a cover-up. However, the court of appeal

overturned Mahon's finding. The council concluded that Mahon's evidence did not support his report and that he had breached [the rules of natural justice](#) because he overlooked the airline's side of the story.

Mahon's claims cost him his career, as he was forced to resign. But his work didn't go unnoticed. His report is regarded as ground-breaking for its insight into organisational failure. This kind of conclusion was revolutionary at the time. Before 1981, most investigators tended to trace all transport accidents back to an individual whereas Mahon shifted the focus toward systematic failures that enabled the human error.

Mahon died in 1986, but his findings had an enduring impact around the world. Some experts still argue Mahon's judgement was unbalanced, but he has become an important figure in New Zealand's history. In 2008, he was posthumously awarded the Jim Collins Memorial Award by the New Zealand Airline Pilots Association for exceptional contributions to air safety.

Peter Mahon will always be remembered as a figure who challenged the establishment, and for producing one of the most direct, undeviating verdicts. He published a bestseller *Verdict on Erebus*, which provides detailed evidence of the airline executive's mistakes. Forever changing general approaches to travel safety is Mahon's legacy.

Unequal Treatment between Poor and Wealthy – Why - Have we got it Completely Backwards?

all may be equal, but some will be more equal than others - 1984 by George Orwell

Governing the Poor: Evidence from New Zealand's Tax and Welfare Systems

LISA MARRIOTT

<https://ojs.victoria.ac.nz/jnzs/article/download/5179/4597/7256>

COMMENT: I believe that this paper is correct in what it says. But it has also completely missed out the most important issues of all – the multiple impacts of marginalisation onto the poor.

Abstract

This study examines five situations in New Zealand where individuals receiving welfare benefits receive more punitive treatment than other citizens. Comparison to tax evaders, tax debtors and taxpayers in general is made throughout the article to highlight the disparities that result from regulatory processes that govern the poor. A neoliberal paternalist perspective is evoked to highlight the different treatments of those who are more or less privileged in society. This framework provides visibility to recently introduced market logics, use of surveillance, increased obligations associated with welfare receipt and increased use of the penal system to punish those who offend against the welfare system. The study draws attention to the punitive outcomes that arise from modern-day governance of the poor.

This article examines a number of ways in which New Zealand's regulatory environment governs the poor and, in particular, those who are recipients of financial assistance from the state. The punitive treatment of those who have less in society is highlighted throughout the study by undertaking a comparative analysis, as appropriate, with the treatment of tax debtors, tax evaders or taxpayers in general.

The research investigates five areas where regulation results in a harsher outcome for those who are receiving welfare assistance from the state, as compared to those who are not. The five areas are: the justice system's treatment of those who engage in tax evasion and those who engage in welfare fraud; the ways in which tax debts and welfare debts are collected; legislation that provides for the partners of welfare fraudsters to be prosecuted and be liable for the debt generated by their partner; asset seizures of those with welfare debts and tax debts; and the different definitions used for serious hardship in relation to welfare debtors and tax debtors.

It has been established in prior literature that the poor are likely to receive more punitive treatment across a range of spheres in society, most commonly in the justice system. This study builds on this literature, with examples from the justice system, as well as other situations where those who are receiving welfare assistance are singled out for either dissimilar or special levels of governance in New Zealand society. The analytical framework of neoliberalism and new paternalism is evoked to examine the tools of poverty governance used in New Zealand. These frameworks also make visible the privileged treatment afforded to the wealthy alongside the punitive treatment of the poor. In addition, they are used as a platform to illustrate how extant narratives can restrict opportunity for change.

The article commences in the next section with a brief outline of the literature on the different treatments of "white-collar" and "blue-collar" criminals at various stages of the justice system. The purpose of this is to set the scene for the data presented in section two and the analysis in section three. The section also provides an outline of the literature pertaining to governance of the poor, in order to highlight this influence within the five

illustrative examples provided in section two. In section one, in addition, neoliberalism and paternalism are introduced. Section two has five subsections, each of which outlines an area where those receiving welfare assistance are treated differently than other New Zealanders. The problem is analysed further in section three, with reference to the literature, and the article's concluding comments made in section four.

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Different treatments of poor and wealthy criminals

Issues relating to the preferential treatment of white-collar criminals were given greatest visibility by Edwin Sutherland well over 60 years ago.² Sutherland's key contribution came from his suggestion that individuals committing white-collar crime were likely to have greater power, greater resources and greater influence, all of which were likely to impact on how they were treated in the justice system.³ Subsequent studies have highlighted the preferential treatment received by those who engage in white-collar crime.⁴

Those who are receiving assistance from the state in the form of traditional welfare benefits, such as those who are unemployed or sole parents, and who commit financial offences associated with welfare assistance, have been a particular target for punitive treatment. For example, in Australia "a sentence of imprisonment is generally considered to be the starting point by the courts in social security fraud cases."⁵ This is despite the fact that financial offending undertaken by the wealthy is "often much greater than that of common criminals."⁶ Research from New Zealand concurs with this finding, showing that welfare fraudsters are more likely to be given a custodial sentence for a lower level of financial offending than tax evaders.

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There are multiple potential reasons for differences in attitudes towards welfare fraud and tax evasion. One option is that tax evaders are not giving their legislated contributions to the state, while welfare fraudsters are taking more than their legal entitlement from the state. Research also suggests that attitudes to tax evasion are more favourable, as those in receipt of welfare "should be grateful that they are getting assistance from the Government and they should not try to take more than they are entitled to" and 'taxpayers are already contributing to society, whereas those on welfare are not'.¹³

Poverty governance, neoliberalism and new paternalism

Research increasingly suggests that the poor will be discriminated against in many private sector transactions. These examples include, but are not limited to, the housing market, retail transactions and the financial industry.¹⁴ Excess punitiveness can also be seen in the public sector, as state sanctioned governance of the poor has the potential to exacerbate the treatment that has positioned the least advantaged in their place in society. The outcomes of the governance of the poor may result in reduced opportunities for social and economic advancement and "active exclusion from the personal benefits of social integration and community."¹⁵

Morrow claims that welfare states—paid for by contributing taxpayers and utilised by noncontributing beneficiaries—are associated with "significant and dangerous general tendencies to ignore the distinction between rules of just conduct and administrative commands."²² John Morrow captures this concept when writing that welfare states "compel those who have participated successfully in the market to contribute to the support of those who either make no effort to engage in socially useful exchanges or have been relatively unsuccessful in their attempts to do so."²³ The danger to society is noted as minimising incentives for productivity and entrepreneurship.

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Morrow notes the "strong strand of moralism" in contemporary neoliberalism, and Nicholas Rose and Peter Miller observe the move from welfarism to neoliberalism "at the level of moralities, explanations and vocabularies."²⁷ All of these are visible in New Zealand from around three decades ago. Ruth Richardson,

Minister of Finance, viewed benefit cuts in the early 1990s as “a statement about the types of lives people should be encouraged to lead, about the types of activities that should be more highly valued, about personal responsibility and integrity.” She argued that discussions on the affordability of the welfare state had assumed that “the welfare state is a ‘good thing.’”²⁸ Upon elaborating on the types of citizens that were seen as less desirable, she contended that the benefit system created strong incentives for people to “alter their circumstances, either to become eligible for a benefit or to remain eligible for a benefit,” which they would remain on indefinitely; that the extant system resulted in the state “subsidising bad choices”; and that the Domestic Purposes Benefit (DPB):²⁹

affected social behaviour in a way that was to have deep and undesirable consequences. It substantially altered the incentives and moral sanctions surrounding human relationships and child-rearing. . . . The DPB reduced the expected financial cost; just as important, it reduced the cost of social disapproval. For women, the DPB also meant they had less at stake when investing in a relationship. For both men and women who were casual about relationships and careless about the consequences in the form of any child that might follow, personal irresponsibility was sanctioned.³⁰

One focus of the neoliberal reforms was the expectation that individuals would take responsibility for their own actions. Negative impacts from such actions were acceptable, but only to the extent that these did not impact on

other individuals. As noted by Morrow, “neo-liberals do not regard **structural** sources of

disempowerment such as restricted access to educational or material resources as breaching this condition: harm only occurs when an individual’s rights are infringed by an identifiable assailant.”³¹

The benefits to be gained by the privileged minority are evident from neoliberal reforms—reduced tax rates that are of greatest benefit to higher income earners and corporations; erosion of the protection of trade unions; and reduced redistribution to assist those who are least well off in society. Its appeal is evident in the “lure of the language of liberal theory with its emphases on individualism, ownership, choice, flexibility, and competition that mask the grim realities of the restoration or reconstitution of naked class power.”³²

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Soss, Fording and Schram adopt the term “new paternalism” to inform their discussion on poverty governance.⁴⁵ They suggest that this view allows insight into the premise that the poor lack the competence to manage their own affairs, lack the discipline needed to engage in appropriate behaviours, have insufficient incentive to act in their own interest, and need direction to live in a form that is desired by the state. Such views are visible in the writings of Mead, who claims that:

the main problem with the welfare state is its permissiveness, not its size. Today poverty often arises from the functioning problems of the poor themselves . . . the social programs that support the needy rarely set standards for them. Recipients seldom have to work or otherwise function in return for support. **If they did, the evidence suggests they would function better.**⁴⁶

[This claim is not backed up by any research.]

New paternalism emphasises the obligations of citizenship. The poor, and particularly those who receive welfare assistance from the state, are targeted as a convenient sample of those who do not fulfil their citizenship obligations. Mead supports paternalism, claiming that “the answer is simply that social programs have failed partly because they expect too little of their recipients, not too much, and there is evidence that clearer standards would improve functioning,” and that “it is precisely the groups who do not work regularly yet are not clearly disabled—unskilled men and welfare mothers with children—who have been the crux of the social problem.”⁴⁷ Mead continues to outline the obligations of adults: they should work in available jobs unless aged or disabled; they should support their family; they should be sufficiently educated to be employable; they should be fluent and literate in English regardless of where they were born; and they should be law-abiding.⁴⁸ Thus, the boundaries of the “good citizen” are established.

New paternalism directs that, for the good of society, the state has a role in controlling the behaviours of the poor. Moreover, this control can be exerted by influence of the income available to the poor, whereby the provision of financial support comes with requirements to behave in ways determined to be acceptable. While compliance is ostensibly voluntary, noncompliance will result in withdrawal of financial support. Soss, Fording and Schram's critique observes that control may take the form of directive social programmes, increased surveillance, and removing "disruptive individuals through incarceration."⁴⁹ These three examples are increasingly used in New Zealand, as outlined below.

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The punitive treatment of those on welfare extends beyond the conditions attached to welfare receipt and into the justice system. One example that is explored in the next section occurs when welfare recipients commit crimes when in receipt of welfare. Loic Wacquant observes that the "generalised increase of carceral populations in advanced societies is due to the growing use of the penal system as an instrument for managing social insecurity and containing the social disorders created at the bottom of the class structure by neo-liberal policies of economic deregulation and social-welfare retrenchment."⁶⁰ This is evident in New Zealand and is examined in the following section. Wacquant terms this "neo-liberal penalty,"⁶¹ and it is also visible in the approach of other writers who identify the criminalisation of welfare.⁶² Alongside the use of prison as a punishment for noncompliance with the welfare system, social welfare "reform" and retraction is used alongside welfare provision to communicate the state view of those who are not fulfilling their civic duties. Commentators have observed that the poor are an easy target for "reform."⁶³ The poor have few resources, they are typically not well networked, and are usually less organised than wealthier groups in society. In New Zealand, the poor have suffered from the demise of trade unions,⁶⁴ and those who are in receipt of welfare are not typically viewed as worthy of public sympathy in the same way as, for example, children living in poverty. The neoliberal paternalistic approaches to welfare are also visible in more subtle tools, such as the definitions used to determine welfare entitlement or to determine what is a crime. Five specific examples follow.

Tax evasion and welfare fraud in the justice system

As outlined in the previous section, research has established that individuals who may identify as "blue-collar" are likely to be treated differently in the justice system than individuals who identify as "white-collar." This has been established in relation to the treatment of tax evaders and welfare fraudsters in the New Zealand justice system. Over the past decade, numbers of welfare fraud investigations ranged from 7,500 (in 2013/14)⁶⁵ to 26,746 (in 2007/08).⁶⁶ This contrasts with tax fraud investigations which are typically around 1,000 per annum. In most years welfare prosecutions number around 1,000 cases.⁶⁷ Criminal prosecutions resulting from tax investigations range from 60 to 80 per annum.⁶⁸

The different treatments of tax and welfare fraudsters are perhaps most evident in the sentencing. Research shows that for average welfare fraud offending of \$76,550, 67 percent of offenders received a custodial sentence. By way of contrast, for average offending of \$229,471, 18 percent of tax offenders received a prison sentence. This example may be further highlighted with reference to two case studies. It will never be possible to find two identical case studies for comparative purposes, but these two case studies had similar periods of offending and similar financial harm resulting from the crimes. As such, they provide an effective illustration of some of the different outcomes that result from tax offending and welfare offending.

In 2006, Wayne Patterson⁶⁹ was investigated, prosecuted and convicted of welfare fraud of \$3.4 million. He had previous convictions in other countries for similar offending. At the time of the conviction Patterson was sentenced to eight years and nine months in prison. While he was eligible for release in 2008, he was not released at this time as he was subsequently charged with forging a document, which was a letter to the Parole Board indicating that he had been accepted for a job interview. Patterson received a further two years in prison for this offence. His offending is unique in two ways: firstly, in the quantum of the offending—at the time of the prosecution the case was more than ten times the value of the most serious welfare fraud case previously discovered (\$250,000); and secondly, the whole amount was repaid—indeed the Crown made a significant gain from the exercise.⁷⁰ Patterson had invested some of the fraudulently obtained funds in Apple shares, and while he contested ownership of these shares, eventually the courts ruled that the Crown was also entitled to these shares, which had increased in value to \$3.3 million. Thus, \$6.7 million was repaid to the Crown from Patterson's offending. He was released after serving 10 years in prison.

By way of comparison, Alex Swney engaged in white-collar offending for over a decade. In 2015, he was convicted of having \$1.8 million of unpaid taxes,⁷¹ and a further \$2.5 million in defrauding a publicly funded organisation, of which he was Chief Executive Officer. The fraud was deliberate and involved the creation of 229 fictitious invoices, where the payment was directed to Swney. He was jailed for five years and seven months. At the time of the conviction, the tax remained outstanding and an Inland Revenue media release noted that the department would be working to recover the stolen funds. Swney served 22 months in custody before his release. What is noticeable about these two cases studies is that they are both serious financial offending of a similar amount. The white-collar offending is higher at \$4.3 million as compared to the blue-collar offending at \$3.4 million. In the case of the welfare fraud a harsher sentence was awarded, yet all the funds were repaid and further financial recompense was made to the Crown. A lesser sentence was awarded for the tax and financial fraud where none of the funds were repaid. Patterson served 10 years in prison: Swney served less than two. The relevant mitigating and aggravating factors in the Sentencing Act 2002 for these crimes are the loss resulting from the offence; abuse of a position of trust; previous convictions; previous good character; remorse; or an early guilty plea. Thus, there are factors that apply both for and against the two individuals discussed above. However, none of these mitigating or aggravating factors is sufficient to explain the difference in sentencing outcomes given to the two crimes. While this comparison would not appear to be relevant to a discussion of governing the poor, as neither offender appeared to fit this description, they are included here as they illustrate the different treatments of those who receive welfare and those who do not.

Who is responsible for tax debt and welfare debt?

The third topic in this section examines amendments made on 7 July 2014 to the Social Security Act 1964 relating to individuals who were convicted of relationship fraud.⁷⁸ The legislative changes resulted in the potential for the partners of those who had been convicted of receiving welfare benefit overpayments as a result of welfare fraud to be jointly and severally liable for the welfare debt generated from the fraud. In addition, the legislative changes allowed for criminal liability for the fraud to be extended to the partner of the person who engaged in the fraudulent activity. The changes require the partners to knowingly benefit from the fraud, but also extend to situations where the partner “ought to have known” they were benefitting. The partner of the beneficiary who has committed the fraud does not need to know the precise amount of the fraud or how the fraud occurred.

The issue with this legislative change is that it isolates a small section of society—welfare beneficiaries and their partners—for separate treatment in the justice system. There have been no attempts to include the partners of those who engage in other forms of financial offending within this extension of liability. This is despite the fact that the partners of those who engage in serious tax evasion or serious financial fraud are likely to benefit to a greater extent than the partners of those who engage in welfare fraud, solely from the average magnitude of such offending.

Section 86AA of the Social Security Act 1964 is the section that introduces recovery from the partner of excess amounts obtained by fraud. On 15 June 2016, an Official Information Act request was made to MSD, asking if any debt had been recovered under new section 86AA. In response to this query, MSD advised that 130 debts had been established under this new section, with collection of \$200,000.⁷⁹

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III What is the problem?

The issue is captured effectively by Schram, Soss, Fording and Linda Houser when they write that “welfare policies for the poor have been redesigned in recent years to reflect the idea that the state has a legitimate interest in ensuring that socially marginal groups practice appropriate behaviors.”⁹⁵ However, the problem goes beyond the punitive governance of the poor and extends to privilege the wealthy. All examples provided above serve not only to disadvantage those in society who have the least, but also to act to benefit those who have the most. Policies towards investigations, prosecutions and sentencing of those who engage in tax evasion are less punitive than those who engage in welfare fraud. Processes for debt collection and debt management advantage those who have tax debts when compared to those who have welfare debts. The partners of those who engage in tax evasion are not pursued for the debts of their partner and are not potentially liable for prosecution where they have benefited from the crime, unlike the partners of those who engage in welfare fraud. While asset seizures are not frequently used, MSD has historically used this avenue to collect welfare debts in a small number of cases, while

Inland Revenue has not. Moreover, those with tax debts will be afforded greater leniency than those with welfare debts if they are in a position of serious hardship.

The examples of regulation and policy tools outlined in the previous two sections highlight the extent to which the state is involved in ensuring compliance, particularly through the use of sanctions as tools to “teach self-discipline to recipients” of welfare.⁹⁶ The new paternalism approach to welfare creates sanctions when rules are not followed. This is visible in the data outlined above, showing that noncompliance in the welfare system will be punished more harshly than financially equivalent noncompliance in the tax system. Recent figures report over 10,000 benefit cancellations where overpayments have occurred.⁹⁷ However, there are a number of legitimate reasons why overpayments may have been made that are unrelated to fraudulent behaviour.

The welfare system in New Zealand is aimed at regulating and, where necessary, disciplining the poor who are in need of support from the state. This is a departure from its historical focus, which was redistribution and ensuring that individuals had the resources to belong and participate in society.⁹⁸ The “investment approach” of the previous New Zealand government adopted a punitive attitude to welfare recipients. It served to reinforce what Schram, Soss, Houser and Fording title an “object lesson,” “instructing low-income populations that even the meanest wages and work conditions are better than the shameful status of the ‘welfare poor.’”⁹⁹ Jobseekers Support essentially requires welfare recipients to apply for low-income work in order that they relocate from being a less deserving welfare recipient to a desirable working taxpayer.

Wacquant links changes in welfare and the justice system, suggesting that increasing emphasis on work readiness alongside increasing use of prison as a punishment for noncompliance with the welfare system is designed to discipline the poor.¹⁰⁰ Wacquant further observes that “at the lowest rung of the social ladder, incarceration serves to physically neutralise and warehouse the supernumerary fractions of the working class and in particular the dispossessed members of stigmatised groups who persist in entering into ‘open rebellion against their social environment.’”¹⁰¹ In New Zealand, those who offend against the state while receiving welfare assistance may expect to be treated more harshly than those who, to adopt Wacquant’s representation, are not on the lowest rung of the social ladder.

The discussion in the previous section on welfare eligibility returns to the concepts of “good” and “bad” citizens. Not all those who receive financial assistance from the state are treated as deserving or undeserving.

Conceptually, those receiving the state pension are the same as those receiving other forms of income support. However, those who receive welfare assistance in the form of the universal state-provided pension are not subject to the same tests, surveillance, reporting or control as those who receive state assistance in the form of Sole Parent or Jobseekers Support. To the extent that reciprocal arrangements exist between the recipient and the state, or the recipient and the taxpayer who is the ultimate funder of the benefit, these are not equivalent when pension recipients and other welfare benefit recipients are contrasted.

Benefit fraud vs tax evasion: NZ's hypocrisy



Dr Steve Matthewman

Dr Steve Matthewman is a Professor of Sociology at the University of Auckland.

<https://www.newsroom.co.nz/ideasroom/nzs-hypocrisy-on-benefit-fraud-vs-tax-evasion>

University of Auckland sociologist Steve Matthewman contrasts the meteoric rise and fall from grace of two of New Zealand's most prominent politicians

It has been the best of times and the worst of times for two prominent women in New Zealand politics: Jacinda Ardern and Metiria Turei. The former assumed the leadership of the Labour Party and the Opposition on August 1. The latter resigned as co-leader of the Greens just over a week later, her 15-year parliamentary career likely having ended. The media is abuzz with talk of the “Jacinda effect”. One journalist wrote of the coming of the “Jacciah”, Labour’s very own messiah. She certainly seems to have delivered them from dismal polling. Party support is up, and Bill English is getting a run for his money in the preferred PM stakes. Turei, meanwhile, has taken a public pounding for welfare and electoral fraud. What is a sociologist to make of all this?

Turei’s fall from grace tells us something about social values. We, the general public, get more upset about what’s ripped off from the state than what’s withheld from it. Benefit fraud exists, so does tax evasion. But as Kerre McIvor recently noted, when the Government ran a ‘dob in a beneficiary’ campaign in the late 1990s the anonymous tip-off line received over 11,000 calls, while an IRD campaign to identify tradespersons working under the table received but a few hundred calls.

Tax avoidance is clearly the greater evil – it takes more from the public purse – but it is far less likely to be punished. Up to 1000 welfare beneficiaries are prosecuted each year.

Lisa Marriott’s work shows that welfare fraud amounts to \$30.6 million per annum, which is not insignificant. However it is nothing compared to government losses from tax avoidance. The Inland Revenue Department costs this at a bare minimum of \$1.2 billion annually, although it admits that it may potentially be many times that.

So when it comes to beneficiaries it would seem that the state has an unduly punitive streak. Tax avoidance is clearly the greater evil – it takes more from the public purse – but it is far less likely to be punished. Up to 1000 welfare beneficiaries are prosecuted each year. Only something like 60 to 80 tax evasion cases are filed annually. Tax

evaders do not come under anything like the same level of scrutiny. They are less likely to be investigated, fined or incarcerated. They are more likely to be white and middle class – in criminality, as with many other things, it matters if your collar is blue or white, or if your skin is brown or white. (The state keeps ample statistics to this effect which you can fact check at your leisure.) Here, then, is another indisputable sociological insight: we treat people of different races and classes differently.

Jacinda Ardern's elevation to the top position in Labour has clearly found favour with women voters, doubtless exasperated by differential treatment.

We also treat people of different genders differently. While New Zealand always comes out favourably in global measures of gender equality, it remains the case that women await pay parity. Back in 2015 Jan Logie examined data from the New Zealand Incomes Survey. On current trends she estimated it would take another 120 years for women to earn as much as men.

Jacinda Ardern's elevation to the top position in Labour has clearly found favour with women voters, doubtless exasperated by differential treatment. Such differences were on display on the day of her ascendancy. She was questioned on her future child plans, which is something no male political leader has been asked. And as a sociologist I would be remiss not to mention another element of Jacinda's popularity, although not necessarily related to gender, which is her charisma. This is an all-important x-factor in the realms of leadership and politics. By comparison Andrew Little, whatever his workplace talents, had, well, little.

It is also sociologically interesting to consider what and whom we believe. I had some interesting experiences accompanying my partner when she co-chaired the Children's Commissioner's Expert Advisory Group on Solutions to Child Poverty. People readily believed in the reality of bad parents, but they typically found it harder, if not impossible, to believe in the reality of child poverty. One of our foundational myths is that ours is a society of equals. Yet since the 1980s we have witnessed some of the widest income inequalities anywhere in the world. Peter Skilling's 2014 survey of 1000 people certainly showed that New Zealanders vastly underestimate our wealth disparities. The gaps between haves and have-nots are bigger than most of us realise.

While we have focused on personalities, in the run-up to the election it makes good sense to scrutinise policies and practices. We are good at praising and blaming people, but not so good at finding fault in social structures, or our economic and political arrangements. Indeed, by personalising pressing issues like poverty we let the system off the hook. The debate surrounding Turei's benefit claims (or Ardern's family plans for that matter) should be set within the context of what we as a society are prepared to excuse and tolerate, what we are not, and what we are willing to change and why.

COMMENT: A nice apology, but with nothing more than the words. Although Jacinda Adern apologised as the current NZ Prime Minister, she and her party were not in power when the Erebus plane crashed. They were not responsible and in fact the Prime Minister who took part in the cover up of Air NZ's liability, was The Right Honourable Sir Piggy Muldoon.

New Zealand PM apologises over 1979 air disaster

AFP

WELLINGTON (NEW ZEALAND):NOVEMBER 28, 2019 11:34 IST



Jacinda Ardern

An Air New Zealand DC-10 on a sightseeing flight over Antarctica slammed into remote Mount Erebus during "whiteout" conditions on the frozen continent on November 28, 1979, killing all on board.

Prime Minister Jacinda Ardern offered an official apology Thursday on the 40th anniversary of New Zealand's worst peacetime disaster, the Mount Erebus air crash in which 257 people died.

An Air New Zealand DC-10 on a sightseeing flight over Antarctica slammed into remote Mount Erebus during "whiteout" conditions on the frozen continent on November 28, 1979, killing all on board.

"That loss, in and of itself, was huge. It sent ripples across the country... but that loss and grief was compounded. It was undeniably worsened by the events that followed," Ardern told a commemoration service in Auckland.

An initial inquiry blamed pilot error but a royal commission, the most powerful judicial inquiry under New Zealand law, subsequently cleared the crew.

It found the airline reset the plane's navigation systems without telling the pilots, inadvertently setting the aircraft on a collision course with the side of the mountain.

The report's author, judge Peter Mahon, also accused Air New Zealand officials of telling "an orchestrated litany of lies" to cover up the mistake and keep the blame on the pilots.

The then prime minister Robert Muldoon attacked Mahon's report, viewing the findings against the state-owned carrier as a blow to national prestige, and it was not formally tabled until 1999, 18 years after its completion.

Ardern said the government's handling of the disaster's aftermath was wrong.

"It caused trauma on top of grief. And persecution on top of pain," said the prime minister, who at 38 was not born when the crash occurred.

She also said put it on record that both the government and Air New Zealand now accepted there was an error with navigation systems and the pilots were totally blameless for the crash.

"The time has come to end the piecemeal acknowledgements," Ardern said.

"After 40 years, on behalf of today's government, the time has come to apologise for the actions of an airline then in full state ownership; which ultimately caused the loss of the aircraft and the loss of those you loved."

COMMENT: This apology was backed up by a substantial assistance package. It is doubtful if the assistance package actually comes anywhere near to the total harms suffered by Pacific peoples. I hope that further assistance is offered, to resolve these issues satisfactorily. They were not responsible and in fact the Prime Minister who took part in the setting up of the Dawn Raids, was The Right Honourable Sir Piggy Muldoon.

1 AUGUST 2021

Government offers formal apology for Dawn Raids

<https://www.beehive.govt.nz/release/government-offers-formal-apology-dawn-raids>



RT HON JACINDA ARDERN Prime Minister



HON AUPITO WILLIAM SIO Pacific Peoples

- A formal and unreserved apology for the Dawn Raids
- The Government will offer education scholarships as part of the apology
- Manaaki New Zealand Short Term Scholarship Training courses
- Support Pacific artists and historians to develop a comprehensive written and oral account of the Dawn Raids

Prime Minister Jacinda Ardern has today formally apologised to Pacific communities impacted by the Dawn Raids in the 1970s.

Between 1974 and 1976, a series of rigorous immigration policies were carried out that resulted in targeted raids on the homes of Pacific families. The raids to find, convict, and deport overstayers often took place very early in the morning or late at night. We understand that the raids were severe with harsh verbal and physical treatment, which gave rise to the term the “Dawn Raids”.

“Today I offered, on behalf of the Government, a formal and unreserved apology to Pacific communities for the discriminatory implementation of immigration laws that led to the Dawn Raids,” Jacinda Ardern said.

“The Dawn Raids period cast a shadow over our shared history. Upholding immigration laws is one thing, but the Dawn Raids went well beyond that.

Whole communities felt targeted and terrorised. The raids were absolutely discriminatory.

“Expressing our sorrow, regret and remorse for past actions is the right thing to do and provides an opportunity for closure and reconciliation,” Jacinda Ardern said.

The Minister for Pacific Peoples, Aupito William Sio says looking back it’s clear that the immigration laws were discriminatory.

“Pacific peoples, Māori and other ethnic communities were specifically targeted and racially profiled, which was wrong and should have never happened,” Aupito William Sio said.

“In 1986 the Race Relations Conciliator found that between 1985 and 1986, while Pacific peoples comprised roughly a third overstayers, they represented 86 per cent of all prosecutions for overstaying. Racially targeting Pacific communities created a decades long false impression of the status of Pacific New Zealanders.

“During the same period overstayers from the United States and Great Britain who also comprised roughly a third of overstayers made up only five per cent of prosecutions,” Aupito William Sio said.

The Government has as part of the formal apology, committed to honour Pacific ways of seeking reconciliation. It will be providing:

- \$2.1 million in academic and vocational scholarships to be available to Pacific communities.
- \$1 million in Manaaki New Zealand Short Term Scholarship Training Courses for delegates from Samoa, Tonga, Tuvalu, and Fiji.
- It will also be providing resources that are available to schools and kura who choose to teach the history of the Dawn Raids, which would include histories of those directly affected.
- The Ministry for Culture and Heritage and Ministry for Pacific Peoples will provide support to enable Pacific artists and/or historians to work with communities to develop a comprehensive historical record of account of the Dawn Raids period as an additional goodwill gesture of reconciliation.

CORPORATE MANSLAUGHTER: A PROPOSED CORPORATE KILLING OFFENCE FOR NEW ZEALAND

Jonathan Wong^[*]

<http://www.nzlii.org/nz/journals/CanterLawRw/2006/6.html>

I. Introduction

A large number of people die in public disasters, including factory and building site disasters, each year, many of which could and should have been prevented.^[1] Such public disasters call for corporations to be prosecuted under the law of manslaughter.^[2] There is a widespread feeling among the public that responsibility in appropriate cases should be fixed on culpable employers who operate and profit from the service they provide to the public, rather than, as is currently the position under the criminal law, on the comparatively junior employees whose acts or omissions caused death. The fundamental cause of many disasters is the failure of management to put in place effective systems and practices for controlling the risk of harm. Tragedies such as the Air New Zealand Mount Erebus crash in 1979,^[3] the 1987 Zeebrugge ferry disaster in British waters,^[4] the 1992 Westray mine explosion in Canada,^[5] and the 1998 Esso Longford gas plant explosion in Australia^[6] were all followed by inquiries which found corporate bodies at fault and meriting very serious criticisms.^[7]

Since 1992 there have been 34 prosecution cases for work-related manslaughter in the United Kingdom but only six, small, organisations have been convicted.^[8] This is due to the limitations and obscurities apparent in the current law. Failures to successfully prosecute corporate defendants have led to an apparent perception among the public that the law dealing with corporate manslaughter is inadequate.

Corporate manslaughter has been an issue of academic and legislative debate in many countries around the world, particularly in the last decade.^[9] The English Law Commission first voiced its concerns in 1994, and it was from this initial discussion that the draft Corporate Manslaughter Bill issued in March 2005 which proposed a special corporate killing offence, was born.^[10] The Governments of Australia and Canada, in 1995 and 2003 respectively, amended their Criminal Codes to bring corporations within the full gamut of the criminal law, including liability for offences punishable by imprisonment, such as manslaughter. Specifically, in the Australian Capital Territory an 'industrial manslaughter' offence is now in its statute book. Corporate manslaughter has also been addressed in many other civil law jurisdictions.^[11]

However, there has been a lack of discussion on corporate manslaughter in New Zealand academic commentary and within the New Zealand legal profession. The purpose of this article is to address the gross failure of a company in New Zealand to set up an adequate system of conducting its operations to avoid harm. This article also proposes an offence of corporate manslaughter for New Zealand. To achieve this, the substantive law pertaining to corporate manslaughter and the developments in other common law jurisdictions will be examined.

Comment is made on sentencing issues, but other issues, such as the territorial application, regulatory impact, investigation and prosecution of the proposed offence, are not considered in this article.

Manslaughter, in the context of this article, refers only to 'involuntary manslaughter'.^[12] Moreover, this article only considers corporate manslaughter that is not a crime of conscious wrong-doing, that is, manslaughter due to neglect or omission.^[13] 'Subjective manslaughter', insofar as it affects companies, will continue to be adjudicated according to the general principle of identification.^[14] This is not unreasonable because the crime depends on significant culpable conscious running of a risk -for this liability to attach to a corporation, conscious decision-making by a senior officer would seem to be required).^[15]

II. Corporations and the Criminal Law

Imposing Criminal Liability on Corporations

There has never been any doubt that members or officers of a corporation cannot shelter behind the corporation and may be successfully prosecuted as individuals for any criminal acts they have performed or authorised. The current general position under the common law is that a corporation is in the same position in relation to the criminal law as a natural person, and may be convicted of crimes including those requiring *mens rea*.^[16] Companies may also be convicted of crimes punishable by penalties apposite only to natural persons.^[17] There are now only a handful of crimes in New Zealand for which a company may not be convicted;^[18] these include the offences of perjury,^[19] bigamy^[20] and homicide, including murder and manslaughter.^[21]

A company is a legal person^[22] without physical human existence, therefore, two main techniques are used for attributing to a corporation the acts and state of mind of its human agents. The first technique is the doctrine of vicarious liability, which, broadly, holds a company liable for harm to another person caused by an employee while in the scope of his or her employment in situations where an individual employer would be liable for such harm. The second technique is conveniently called the doctrine of 'identification', where the company may be held liable because the acts done by its human agents who are deemed to be in control of the company are treated, for the purposes of criminal liability, as acts done by the company itself. Where neither technique applies, a corporation is not criminally liable.^[23]

Vicarious Liability of Corporations

It is a long-established common law rule that vicarious liability does not form part of the criminal law, even though civil law has long held that an employer may be responsible for the torts of its employees acting in the course of their employment.^[24] However, under the criminal law, offenders are generally only answerable for their own acts or omissions.^[25] A defendant will normally only be liable for the actions of its servants on the basis of being a party to those actions.^[26]

However, vicarious liability may be found for the offences of public nuisance and criminal libel. Vicarious liability may also apply in circumstances where statutory offences which clearly

impose responsibility upon a defendant for the acts of its servant or agent, where failure to hold the employee or principal liable for the acts of its servant or agent would be to 'render nugatory' the statute creating the offence and thus defeat the will of Parliament.^[27] Liability may be established without *mens rea* on the part of the defendant, therefore, it follows that this form of liability is likely to be relatively rare. It is typically confined to legislation which regulates liquor licensing and the distribution of foodstuffs.^[28] Simester and Brookbanks write that there does not appear to be any legislative tendency to expand the scope of vicarious liability outside of these areas.^[29]

The Doctrine of Identification (Rules of Attribution)

The principle of identification now applies in situations where vicarious liability does not apply. The so-called 'rules of attribution' are used to determine which acts of a human agent count as the acts of the company, and thus determine the circumstances in which a company may be liable for the acts and mental state of an individual. The principle of identification, and the clear distinction between it and the doctrine of vicarious liability, was described by Lord Reid in the leading authority of *Tesco Supermarkets Ltd v Natrass*:^[30]

[A company] must act through living persons, though not always one or the same person. Then the person who acts is not speaking or acting for the company. He is acting as the company and his mind which directs his act is the mind of the company. There is no question of the company being vicariously liable. He is not acting as a servant, representative, agent or delegate. He is an *embodiment* of the company ... and his mind is the mind of the company. If it is a guilty mind than that guilt is the guilt of the company.

The rules of attribution

The basic rule of attribution is that, for an individual's conduct and state of mind to be identified with the company, he or she must be in *control* of the company or a sphere of its activities.^[31] The court in *Tesco* stated that the rule requires the identification of the 'directing mind and will' of a corporation, the process of such identification being a question of law.^[32] However, there are two qualifications to this requirement.

First, where there is a difference between the nominal and the effective authority within a company, the courts will attribute the actions of an individual on the basis of the particular company's actual as well as its legal management structure. In *Meridian Global Funds Management Asia Ltd v Securities Commission*,^[33] a company was held liable for the acts of an investment manager who breached the notice requirements in the New Zealand *Securities Amendment Act 1988*, despite the manager only being in de facto control of the company with nominal authority remaining in the hands of his superior. Therefore, provided that the person speaks and acts as the company, and is in actual control of company operations, liability may attach to the company.^[34]

Second, where generalised rules of attribution defeat the legislative intention that a particular law was intended to apply to companies, the court must fashion a special rule of attribution 'tailored ... to the terms and policies' of the particular substantive rule.^[35] The use of the 'directing mind and will' formula was specifically rejected by the Privy Council in *Meridian* because it suggests that only the actions, knowledge and intention of those in senior

management positions could ever be attributed to the company. In *Meridian* the Privy Council said that whether the actions, knowledge and intention of a particular individual may be attributed to a company remains a *matter of construction* of the legislation's *intention* in each case.^[36] Thus, the determination of those whose actions are to be attributed to the company is not solely the province of the company's internal hierarchy. Rather, it is the nature of the functions performed by the individual that is crucial.^[37]

Corporate Liability for Manslaughter

The Court of Appeal in *R v Murray Wright*^[38] held that homicide, including both murder and manslaughter, cannot be committed by a company as a principal because of the definition of homicide in s 158 of the *Crimes Act 1961* as the 'killing of one human being by another'.^[39] However, s 66 of the *Crimes Act 1961*, governing secondary participation to an offence, does not mention the term 'human being' and therefore a company may be liable as party to homicide.^[40]

However, in the United Kingdom an indictment for manslaughter now lies directly against a corporation. Originally, Finlay J in the 1927 decision of *R v Cory Bros Ltd*,^[41] quashed an indictment against a company for manslaughter on the basis that homicide required the killing to be done by a human being. However, in 1944 Stale J pointed out that *Cory Bros* was decided before the identification principle was developed and he was of the view that the case would be decided differently if the matter came before the court again.^[42]

The issue was finally settled in 1990 in the United Kingdom Criminal Court decision of *R v P & O European Ferries (Dover) Ltd*.^[43] In that case Turner J comprehensively reviewed the authorities in the United Kingdom and some other jurisdictions (including *Murray Wright* in New Zealand)^[44] and concluded that an indictment for manslaughter could lie against a corporation.^[45] His Honour reviewed statements in works such as those of Coke, Hale, Blackstone and Stephen (who drafted New Zealand's original Criminal Code) that defined homicide as killing by a human being, however, he dismissed these statements as not being exclusive because at the time that these definitions originated the concept of corporate criminal liability was not in existence or even in the contemplation of the courts or academic writers.^[46] Turner J further reasoned that any crime, in order to be justiciable, must have been committed by or through the agency of a human being. Therefore, the inclusion of the expression 'human being' in the definition of homicide was either tautologous, or more probably intended to differentiate those cases of death where a human being played no direct part from those in which the cause of death was initiated by human activity using an inanimate instrument of death, or using an animate but non-human instrument. Turner J concluded that the identification doctrine had transformed corporate liability by enabling the imputation of *mens rea* to a corporation and therefore enabling it to be convicted of an offence requiring a mental element:^[47]

Since the nineteenth century there has been a huge increase in the numbers and activities of corporations ... A clear case can be made for imputing to such corporations social duties including the duty not to offend all relevant parts of the criminal law. By tracing the history of the cases decided by the English Courts over the period of the last 150 years, it can be seen how first tentatively and finally confidently the Courts have been able to ascribe to corporations a 'mind' which is generally one of the essential ingredients of common law and statutory offences

... Once a state of mind could be effectively attributed to a corporation, all that remained was to determine the means by which that state of mind could be ascertained and imputed to a non-natural person. That done, the obstacle to the acceptance of general criminal liability of a corporation was overcome ... [T]here is nothing essentially incongruous in the notion that a corporation should be guilty of the offence of unlawful killing ... [W]here a corporation, through the controlling mind of one of its agents, does an act which fulfils the prerequisites of the crime of manslaughter, it is properly indictable for the crime of manslaughter.

Thus, it is clear that in the United Kingdom an indictment for manslaughter can lie against a corporation primarily because of, as Turner J reasons, the identification principle. Furthermore, as already noted, the Privy Council's decision in *Meridian Global Funds Management Asia Ltd v Securities Commission*[\[48\]](#) held, rejecting the 'directing mind and will' formula, that a special rule of attribution 'tailored ... to the terms and policies' of the particular substantive rule must be fashioned where generalised rules of attribution defeat the legislative intention that a particular law was intended to apply to companies. At common law today the general rule is that a corporation is in the same position in relation to the criminal law as a natural person, and thus the ability to try a company for manslaughter in New Zealand would further the objectives of the criminal law. As Simester and Brookbanks contend:[\[49\]](#)

Indeed, it is arguable that corporate liability should be more wide-ranging than it presently is, in that the current barrier to liability as principal for homicide is anachronistic and out of step with the law in other jurisdictions. There is no obvious reason why a company should avoid liability as a principal on a charge of manslaughter. Indeed, the potential for serious injury and death that may be caused by negligent and wilful corporate activity powerfully supports amending the law to allow such prosecutions to proceed. Growing concern about the need to establish a corporate 'safety culture'[\[50\]](#) and the emerging view that corporations should be culpability-bearing agents in their own right, as implied in the notion of personal corporate liability, hint in the direction of future reform ...

Thus, it is submitted that *Murray Wright* would not be decided in the same way today. An indictment for manslaughter should be able to lie against a corporation in New Zealand.

Applying the Substantive Law of Manslaughter to Corporations

In New Zealand, 'involuntary manslaughter' describes killings where the defendant is guilty of culpable homicide, but not guilty of murder; manslaughter under provocation; killing in furtherance of a suicide pact; or infanticide. Its scope is exceptionally wide and depends on the definition of culpable homicide in s 160(2) of the *Crimes Act 1961*. For the purposes of corporate manslaughter, s 160(2)(b) is the relevant section, which provides that:[\[51\]](#)

- (1) Homicide is culpable when it consists in the killing of any person-
- (b) By an omission without lawful excuse to perform or observe any legal duty;

Sections 151-153 and 155-157 of the *Crimes Act 1961* codify certain 'duties tending to the preservation of life' which were recognised at common law, and provide for criminal responsibility where harm may have resulted from a mere omission or, an omission to comply with a legal duty.[\[52\]](#) However, s 160(2)(b) refers to 'any legal duty' and the Court of Appeal has held that this includes duties recognised by the common law as well as by statute, and even the

common law version of a codified duty.^[53] The *mens rea* requirement for involuntary manslaughter by omission is gross negligence. Section 150A of the *Crimes Act 1961* states that in respect of the legal duties specified in ss 151-153 and 155-157, the omission or neglect is required to be 'a major departure from the standard of care expected of a reasonable person to whom that legal duty applies in those circumstances'.^[54] For a breach of a common law duty, gross negligence will also be required.^[55] For the purposes of this article, the offence will now be referred to as gross negligence manslaughter. The English Court of Appeal in *Attorney-General's Reference (No 2 of 1999)*^[56] stated that 'the identification principle remains the only basis in common law for corporate liability for gross negligence manslaughter'. The effect of this proposition was illustrated in the prosecution against P & O European Ferries (Dover) Ltd.^[57] The prosecution came as a result of the tragic capsizing of the ferry, *Herald of Free Enterprise*, with the loss of 150 passengers and 38 crew members. The immediate cause of the capsize was that the ferry had set sail with her inner and outer bow doors open.^[58] The prosecution against the company ultimately failed because Turner J directed the jury that in order to convict it of manslaughter, one of the individual employees who could be 'identified' with the company would have to be guilty of manslaughter.^[59] On this basis, the case against the company had to fail because there was insufficient evidence on which to convict any of the individual defendants under the fault requirement for involuntary manslaughter at the time, being *Caldwell* recklessness.^[60]

Thus, Turner J ruled against the adoption into English criminal law a rule of 'aggregation.' This rule would have aggregated the faults of a number of individuals where none of the faults individually amounted to the mental element required for manslaughter, because in their totality they amounted to such a high degree of fault that the company could have been convicted of manslaughter.^[61] Therefore, liability was contingent upon the finding of one individual who, by himself or herself, satisfied the entire mental element of manslaughter, and thus was himself or herself guilty of the crime.

Even if Turner J had the benefit of approaching the issue of individual liability on the basis of gross negligence (the required mental element for involuntary manslaughter today), rather than *Caldwell* recklessness, the United Kingdom Law Commission was of the view that^[62]

it seems likely that he would have reached the same conclusion. The dominant test remained the test set out in *Bateman*,^[63] of doing something which no reasonably skilled *doctor* would have done. On this approach, based as it is on the practices of the relevant profession or industry, it would have been difficult to prove that the mode of operation of this ship, although not that of other companies, fell seriously below prevailing standards.

Problems with the Current Law

The identification doctrine has been criticised. The difficulty lies in identifying the person or people who are the embodiment of the company. As Wells points out, the more diffuse the company structure (which is extremely common in large modern New Zealand companies), and the more developed the powers that are given to semi-autonomous managers, the easier it will be to avoid liability.^[64] Field and Norg have revealed that there is an increasing tendency for many organisations to decentralise safety services in particular, often deliberately, and some companies use contract laboratories to conduct their safety research.^[65]

Although the Privy Council's decision in *Meridian*^[66] has restated the identification principle so that it is the nature of the functions performed by the individual that is crucial, rather than their position in the company, there are still problems with the identification doctrine which were highlighted by the *P & O European Ferries* decision.^[67] If no single individual (or group of individuals) had the function or responsibility for safety matters, as it was in that case, it becomes almost impossible to identify the controlling officers for whose shortcomings the company could be liable.^[68] Furthermore, Turner J held that individual defendants who could be 'identified' with the company would themselves have to be guilty of gross negligence manslaughter. The prosecution failed despite the findings of a judicial inquiry (published in the Sheen Report) that all who were concerned in management of the ferry company must be regarded as sharing responsibility for the failure of management and that from top to bottom the corporation was infected with the disease of sloppiness.^[69] The result of the identification principle has been that in the United Kingdom there have been 34 prosecution cases for work-related manslaughter since 1992, but only six, small, organisations have been convicted, illustrating the failure to convict primarily large companies with complex management structures.

III. The Health and Safety in Employment Act 1992

The *Health and Safety in Employment Act 1992* puts primary responsibility on employers to take all practicable steps to ensure the safety of workers and others while at work. Section 15 of the Act states that 'every employer shall take all practicable steps to ensure that no action or inaction of any employee while at work harms any other person.' In relation to employees, s 6 states that employers^[70] have a general duty to take 'all practicable steps'^[71] to ensure the safety of employees at work and, in particular, to provide and maintain a safe working environment and facilities for the safety and health of employees at work.^[72]

An employer, or any other party with duties under the Act, is liable to be punished by a fine not exceeding \$500,000 or imprisonment for a term for not more than two years if the offence is likely to cause serious harm to others, and up to \$250,000 for other offences.^[73] In addition, section 56 states that where a corporation has breached the Act, any officer, director, or agent who has 'directed, authorised, assented to, acquiesced in, or participated in' the failure is a party to and guilty of the failure and is liable on conviction to the punishment provided for the offence, whether or not the corporation has been prosecuted or convicted. Section 56, however, is rarely used and the Department of Labour's Occupational Safety and Health Services own guidelines indicate that unless an officer, director or agent had clear knowledge that the situation was unsafe or in breach of the Act, inspectors should simply proceed against the company. Some commentators believe that the existence of the *Health and Safety in Employment Act 1992* renders otiose the need for a corporate manslaughter offence. They contend that the only added advantage of such an offence is stigma.^[74]

However, despite the existence of similar regulatory regimes dedicated to dealing with workplace health and safety overseas, there are calls both overseas and domestically for a more effective legal response in those very serious cases resulting in death or serious injury.^[75] The arguments reflect the view that the Act fails to properly reflect the moral outrage that the community feels when a death occurs through the gross negligence of the employer, and fails to

reinforce the notion that all workplace fatalities are unacceptable.^[76] This is borne out by factors such as the offences not being indictable and, therefore, generally prosecuted in the lower courts;^[77] that prosecution is considered only a last resort;^[78] that the fines imposed by the courts are generally small;^[79] fines for large corporations are not sufficiently punitive and therefore lack the necessary deterrent and retributive effect;^[80] and the small number of proceedings against senior officers of corporations.^[81]

Furthermore, Parliament increased fines to the current levels in 2003 to fortify the legislation,^[82] and yet the number of workplace accidents in New Zealand and the average fine for a health and safety prosecution has not really changed.^[83]

IV. The Need for Reform

The reasons in favour of and against extending corporate liability for manslaughter are briefly listed below.^[84] This list, however, is by no means exclusive. Furthermore, any arguments against the *principle* that a corporation may be liable for corporate manslaughter has already been dealt with^[85] - the discussion that follows only concerns *practical* reasons for or against extending the law, and is based on the premise that indictment against a corporation for manslaughter is possible in New Zealand. However, it should be borne in mind the reason why corporations were established in the first place. In particular, the advantage of limited liability and separate legal personality has allowed incorporated organisations to succeed and in turn benefit society.^[86]

The reasons in favour of extending corporate liability for manslaughter include:

- The need to give practical effect to the recently established principle in England that an indictment lies against a corporation for manslaughter, rather than rely on the problematic identification doctrine.
- The need to restore public confidence in industry and enforcement bodies, and address the overwhelming public concern expressed over the leniency shown to workplace deaths compared to other forms of homicide occurring outside the workplace. Furthermore, criminal law prosecutions may strengthen the public perception of the importance of safety at work and counter the view that negligence in the work context is regarded less seriously by the state than deaths caused negligently outside the workspace.^[87]
- In practice, the negligence of a single individual is rarely the sole cause of death or personal injury at the workspace. Rather, they are generally the result of failure in systems for controlling risk and the carelessness of an individual or individuals is also a (more or less important) contributory factor.
- Deterrence.
- The availability of different types of sentence other than just fines such as 'equity fines' and corporate probation to rehabilitate a corporation in ways not open to individuals.^[88]
- The inadequacy of the regulatory offences in *Health and Safety in Employment Act 1992* in New Zealand.^[89]
- The fact that corporate manslaughter is on the legislative agenda overseas, and that in fact an industrial manslaughter offence has been enacted in the ACT (the smallest jurisdiction in Australia). Furthermore, in reviewing an extension of the law, New Zealand has the benefit of observing such movements overseas and does not have to start with a clean slate.

The reasons against the extension of corporate liability for manslaughter include:[\[90\]](#)

- The aim that those responsible for the conduct of activities which might affect public safety from causing harm to employees or members of the public is best achieved by imposing *personal* liability on those who undertake such activities, not *corporate* liability.
- However, where the inadequate management or organisation of a corporation has caused or contributed to a death, it is often difficult in practice to identify any individual who is at fault, especially where an omission to act is involved. The *P & O European Ferries* decision is a striking illustration of this point.[\[91\]](#) This article supports the view of the English Law Commission that there is an overpowering argument, on public policy grounds, that a corporation should be liable for a fatal accident caused by gross negligence in the management or organisation of its activities.[\[92\]](#)
- Where a major disaster has occurred, witnesses would be reluctant to give evidence to any subsequent inquiry for fear that criminal prosecutions might follow. However, this argument applies only to major disasters - many of the cases that this article is concerned with did not involve a major disaster (and hence no inquiry took place). Moreover, this problem is not peculiar to cases of *corporate* liability, and may also arise in prosecutions against individuals.[\[93\]](#)
- Over-regulation is gradually making the more hazardous business activities (such as, demolition work, etc) uninsurable, and as a result, costs will greatly increase.
- The overseas experience shows that bringing reforms into effect take far too long.[\[94\]](#) One reason for this is the lack of consensus between industry, the unions and interested pressure groups about what form such reforms should take, and whether reform should be introduced at all.

V. Options for Reform

The strong arguments in favour of extending the law pertaining to corporate manslaughter lead to the conclusion that reform in New Zealand is required. The purpose of this article is to address the problem of the gross failure of a company to set up an adequate system of conducting its operations to avoid harm, irrespective of whether or not an individual within the corporation is liable. In light of the arguments against the extension of liability mentioned in the previous section, any option for reform must specifically address this problem, and not go too far. The options for reform below are only considered briefly, because it is the view of the author that the only sensible and effective option is to legislate a special offence of corporate manslaughter.

Rely on the Current Law

Two important cases have been recently decided. The first case is *R v British Steel Plc*,[\[95\]](#) where the English Court of Appeal construed s 3(1) of the *Health and Safety at Work etc Act 1974* (UK) as imposing vicarious liability. Section 3(1) provides:

It shall be the duty of every employer to conduct his undertaking in such a way as to ensure, so far as is reasonably practicable, that persons not in his employment who may be affected thereby are not thereby exposed to risks to their health or safety.[\[96\]](#)

In this case, a steel platform which was supported by four supports was cut free, without first being secured to a crane or other prop, thus collapsing and killing a worker. The Court of Appeal upheld the conviction of British Steel, holding that, subject to the words 'so far as is reasonably practicable', s 3(1) created an absolute prohibition. The Court of Appeal accepted that its decision might result in the imposition of liability on a corporation where, for example, an employee merely dropped a spanner or drove without due care and attention. However, the Court reasoned that in some cases this would not be an absurd result as the incident might have occurred because at some level in its hierarchy the corporation's system had broken down. For example, the driver's carelessness might have resulted from attempting to meet excessively tight schedules or from tiredness due to over-long hours of work. In other cases prosecution was unlikely or, if brought, would probably result in an absolute discharge and a refusal of an order for the defendant to pay the prosecution's costs.[\[97\]](#) Furthermore, the Court of Appeal rejected the argument that the principle of identification applied, the effect of which would reduce time in trials by dispensing with the need to examine whether particular employees were part of senior management. Lord Steyn concluded that the effect of this judgment would be to simplify the law and enable employers and employees to know where they stood in relation to the law. Additionally, it would promote a culture of guarding against risks to health and safety caused by hazardous industrial activity.[\[98\]](#)

The second case is the New Zealand Court of Appeal decision of *Linework Ltd v Department of Labour*,[\[99\]](#) a case involving s 6 of the *Health and Safety in Employment Act 1992*, a similar provision to s 3(1) of the *Health and Safety at Work etc 1974* (UK).[\[100\]](#) The Court of Appeal preferred the approach taken in *British Steel* to that in a 1994 House of Lords decision.[\[101\]](#) The Court supported the reasons proffered by Lord Steyn above, which it

said were particularly relevant to New Zealand where, in comparison to other jurisdictions, the accident compensation scheme has to some extent reduced the incentive for an employer to ensure the safety of its workers, as an injured party cannot sue for compensatory damages.[\[102\]](#) Additionally, like *British Steel*, under the New Zealand statute there was no need to identify the 'directing mind' of a corporate employer as required under the identification doctrine.[\[103\]](#) However, unlike *British Steel*, s 6 was held *not* to invoke the doctrine of vicarious liability. Tipping J explained:[\[104\]](#)

The analysis did not depend on [the status of the person at fault] within the employer company, or upon concepts of agency or vicarious liability. It relies simply upon the proposition that once there has been a failure to take a practicable step to ensure the employee's safety, the employer is [*personally*, not vicariously,] responsible for that failure.

It could be argued that the decisions of *British Steel* and *Linework* render otiose the need for legislative extension of corporate manslaughter. If so, all that may be recommended is that where the relevant breach of duty has resulted in death, the *Health and Safety in Employment Act 1992* offences should be triable only on indictment, or, perhaps, that a new offence along the lines of section 6 of the Act should be introduced which is triable only on indictment and relates specifically to cases where death has resulted.[\[105\]](#) However, this option would go too far for New Zealand. First, it would virtually make the corporation strictly liable for the acts or omissions of any employee which resulted in the death of another, rather than impose on a corporation liability where it was to blame for the death because the death arose from the

(grossly) careless way in which it organised or managed the conduct of its activities. Second, it would render the company liable without regard to the seriousness of the breach in question.[\[106\]](#)

Vicarious Liability

Vicarious liability has been adopted in many United States jurisdictions to extend corporate liability. In brief, a corporation can be liable for a crime committed by *any* employee of the corporation if it is committed within the scope of the employee's employment and the act or omission which constitutes the crime is intended to benefit the corporation.[\[107\]](#) However as has already been stated, in New Zealand it is a long-standing and fundamental rule that vicarious liability does not form part of the criminal law.[\[108\]](#) More importantly, vicarious liability is criticised because it automatically, and unfairly, penalises a company for the fault of one of its employees even where it had taken considerable measures to prevent the kind of incident that caused the death.[\[109\]](#) It seems unrealistic to expect directors and senior management of a company to oversee in person the actions of a workforce that may be numbered in the thousands.[\[110\]](#) Furthermore, because vicarious liability depends upon proof that an individual employee has committed an offence, it introduces the often practical difficulty in identifying such a person.[\[111\]](#)

Extending the Doctrine of Identification by Adoption of the Principle of 'Aggregation'.

The 'aggregation' principle would enable the court to 'aggregate' the conduct and mental states of a number of a corporation's controlling officers, so that liability would not be contingent upon finding one individual who, by himself or herself, satisfies the entire *mens rea* requirement.[\[112\]](#) However, a principle of aggregation *within the framework of the doctrine of identification* would still require a detailed investigation into the conduct and state of mind of particular officers.[\[113\]](#) Moreover, problems arise where different controlling officers knew or believed different things. In practice, it is often possible to state with confidence what the corporation did or omitted to do without investigating the conduct of individual controlling officers and the information that each of them possessed.[\[114\]](#) Because the principle of aggregation requires such examination of each individual controlling officer's conduct and state of mind, it would not enable the fact that one can state with confidence what the corporation has done or omitted to do to be reflected automatically in a finding that the corporation was therefore liable. The principle of aggregation would not enable this fact to be reflected automatically in a finding that the corporation was therefore liable.[\[115\]](#)

'Reactive Fault'

Another, more radical, proposal for reforming corporate liability is Fisse and Braithwaite's notion of 'reactive fault'.[\[116\]](#) This would judge a corporation's liability *post hoc*, according to the steps which it had taken after the accident to prevent any recurrence, such as correcting its practices, ensuring compensation, and generally acting as a responsible company should.

However, while this method can be applauded for focussing on a corporation's internal decision structures and policies rather than the acts and omissions of individuals, in addition to in-principle objections to abandoning the concurrence principle, there is the practical difficulty in determining the degree of reactive fault required for manslaughter.[\[117\]](#) Furthermore, the

prosecutorial and forensic burden would be enormous and prohibitive because reactive fault would require a review of corporate safety and other procedures within an open-ended time-frame.[\[118\]](#) Rather than adopt such a radical approach in New Zealand it is submitted in this article that it is best to adopt a reform that is based as closely as possible upon ordinary principles of criminal law.[\[119\]](#)

Legislate an Offence of Corporate Liability for Manslaughter

In response to concerns about the efficacy of the current law, the trend in overseas jurisdictions is for the legislature to modify general criminal provisions to have the effect of making corporate killing by gross negligence an offence,[\[120\]](#) or to enact a special separate offence of corporate killing.[\[121\]](#)

Such provisions do away with the identification doctrine. This is achieved by holding a corporation liable for failing to meet a particular standard of conduct, rather than attempting to say that a corporation has done a particular act or entertained a particular state of mind which requires a consideration of the mind of a representative of the company.[\[122\]](#) After all, gross negligence is a crime of (serious) neglect or omission. Therefore, the question should be whether the *corporation* fell within the criteria for liability applicable to the offence of gross negligence manslaughter.

Thus, an offence based on this premise, and tailored to the peculiar characteristics of corporations, would provide a more effective means of attributing liability in New Zealand than the identification doctrine. This option for reform is favoured by this article.[\[123\]](#) The next Part considers how to best give effect to this principle.

VI. The Proposed Offence for New Zealand

An Offence of Corporate Killing

In developing a discrete corporate manslaughter offence, an initial concern is that companies should not be unjustly convicted merely because they are in charge of an operation at which a disaster has occurred. Furthermore, the proposed offence should not increase regulatory burdens, stifle entrepreneurial activity or create a risk averse culture: corporations who already take their obligations under health and safety law seriously should have nothing to fear. The right balance must be struck between an effective offence and legislation that would unnecessarily impose a burden on business. This can be achieved by focussing on what is currently wrong with the law: the need to find a controlling officer personally guilty of gross negligence manslaughter before the company itself can be convicted.[\[124\]](#) Rather than attempt to draft an offence with precise accuracy, the elements of the proposed corporate manslaughter offence for New Zealand are listed as follows:

- The offence applies to an organisation which owes a duty of care:
 - (a) to its employees as such;
 - (b) in its capacity as occupier of land; or
 - (c) in connection with -

- (i) the supply by the organisation of goods or services (whether for consideration or not); or
 - (ii) the carrying on by the organisation of any other activity on a commercial basis.
- Whether an organisation owes a duty of care to a particular individual is a question of law. The judge must make any findings of fact necessary to decide this question.
- An organisation is guilty of the offence of corporate manslaughter if the way in which any of the organisation's activities are managed or organised by its senior managers:
 - (a) causes a person's death (determined by the usual principles of causation in criminal law); and
 - (b) amounts to a gross breach of the duty of care owed by the organization to the deceased. Such a breach of a duty of care is 'gross' if the failure in question constitutes conduct falling far below what can reasonably be expected of the organisation in the circumstances.
- A person is a 'senior manager' of an organisation if he or she plays a significant role in:
 - (a) the making of decisions about how the whole or a substantial part of its activities are to be managed or organised; or
 - (b) the actual managing or organising of the whole or a substantial part of those activities.
- An individual cannot be guilty of aiding, abetting, counselling or procuring the offence of corporate manslaughter.
- The offence of corporate manslaughter does not abolish the existing statutory offence of manslaughter in its application to corporations.

The proposed offence draws on a critical examination of some aspects of enacted or proposed offences present in the United Kingdom, Australia and Canada. The elements outlined above are discussed fully in the following sections of this article.

It is convenient at this point to outline the situation in Australia. In 1995, the federal government of Australia enacted the *Criminal Code Act 1995* (Cth). Part 2.5 of the Act specifically brings corporations within the full gamut of the Australian criminal law by setting down basic principles of corporate responsibility which will apply to any offence, including those punishable by imprisonment such as manslaughter. In Australia, each state has responsibility for enacting and enforcing offences in relation to general and serious crimes including the offence of homicide.^[125] Only the Australian Capital Territory ('ACT') has incorporated the provisions of the *Criminal Code Act 1995* (Cth), through the *Criminal Code 2002* (ACT).^[126] The ACT amended its *Crimes Act 1900* (ACT) by the *Crimes (Industrial Manslaughter) Amendment Act 2003* (ACT), which commenced operation on 1 March 2004. The *Crimes Act 1900* (ACT) now contains two new 'industrial manslaughter' offences: an employer offence and a senior officer offence.^[127] The offences only relate to the death of an employee, not a member of the public.

Section 49C of the *Crimes Act 1900* (ACT) introduces an employer offence of industrial manslaughter. An employer commits an offence if:

(a) A worker of the employer -

- (i) dies in the course of the employment by, or providing services to, or in relation to, the employer; or
- (ii) is injured in the course of employment by, or providing services to, or in relation to, the employer and later dies; and

(b) the employer's conduct causes the death of the worker; and

(c) the employer is -

- (i) reckless about causing harm to the worker, or any other worker of the employer, by the conduct; or
- (ii) negligent about causing the death of the worker, or any other worker of the employer, by the conduct.

If the employer who is being prosecuted is a *corporation*, then Part 2.5 of the *Criminal Code Act 1995* (Cth) applies, which, as already mentioned, provides company-specific provisions.

Scope and Application of the Offence

The offence should apply as widely as possible, not just to incorporated bodies, but also to other forms of business organisation, for example, partnerships and public bodies.^[128] This is because although the aim of this article is to extend liability for corporations due to the current restrictions in the law that relate only to corporations, many unincorporated and public bodies in New Zealand are in practice indistinguishable from corporations. The aim of the proposed offence is to target management and organisation failings in *behaviour*, and such behaviour, unfortunately, is often demonstrated by unincorporated and public bodies and, arguably, their liability for fatal accidents should be the same. The proposed corporate killing offence in the United Kingdom's Corporate Manslaughter Bill does not apply to unincorporated bodies.^[129] However, not including such unincorporated bodies could lead to an arbitrary distinction and inconsistency of approach when management failings have caused death.^[130] This should override any concerns about the appropriateness of prosecuting an unincorporated body with no separate status and a potentially changing membership for an offence that seeks to identify failings within the organisation that can be considered as failings of the organisation itself. Therefore, this article proposes an offence that applies where an organisation owes a duty of care:

(a) to its employees as such;

(b) in its capacity as occupier of land; or

(c) in connection with -

- (i) the supply by the organisation of goods or services (whether for consideration or not); or
- (ii) the carrying on by the organisation of any other activity on a commercial basis.^[131]

The effect is to include within the offence the type of activities pursued by companies and other bodies corporate, whether performed by commercial organisations, or by the Crown, or by other public bodies.^[132] Included would be a range of bodies which have not been traditionally classified as corporations including schools, hospital trusts, partnerships and unincorporated charities.

The new offence would only apply in circumstances where an organisation owed a duty of care to the victim. This would reflect the current position under the offence of gross negligence manslaughter. The duty of care can be a common law or statutory duty of care, and whether an organisation owed a duty of care to a particular individual would be a question of law.

Conduct of the Defendant that Causes Death

There are two aspects to the conduct requirement. First, the defendant must have acted, or omitted to act, in a particular way; and second, the death must have resulted from that act or omission. The critical inquiry would be: in what circumstances can it properly be said that it is not merely the conduct of a corporation's *agents* that has caused the death, but it is the conduct of *the corporation itself* that has caused the death.^[133] The focus should be on the *kind of conduct* that should incur liability, not on the *identity* of the person or persons responsible for it, which is the focus of the identification principle. The conduct requirements in each of the offences of the United Kingdom, Australia and Canada are now discussed.

The United Kingdom

Clause 1(1) of the draft Corporate Manslaughter Bill states that an 'organisation to which this section applies is guilty of the offence of corporate manslaughter if *the way in which any of the organisation's activities are managed or organised by its senior managers* causes a person's death.'^[134] This involves the notion of 'management failure.' The concept of 'management failure' is derived from the law governing an employer's common law obligation to take care of the safety of employees, and one aspect of that obligation in particular, namely, the employer's duty to provide a safe system of work.^[135] The 'management failure' approach focuses on the arrangements, systems and practices for carrying out the corporation's work.

Australia

With offences involving negligence, such as the ACT's industrial manslaughter offences, section 12.4 of Part 2.5 of the *Criminal Code Act 1995* (Cth) states that the company itself may be taken as negligent if its 'conduct is negligent when viewed as a whole (that is, by aggregating the conduct of any number of its employees, agents or officers)' if no individual employee, agent or officer is negligent.^[136] Alleged negligence of a company 'may be evidenced by the fact that the prohibited conduct was substantially attributable to *inadequate corporate management, control or supervision* of the conduct of one or more of its employees, agents or officers; or *failure to provide adequate systems for conveying relevant information to relevant persons in the body corporate*'.^[137] The Australian Law Reform Commission states that this arrangement is consistent with Fisse's concept of 'organisational blameworthiness' as the determinant of liability for corporations.^[138]

Canada

The *Canadian Criminal Code* was amended by Bill C-45, *An Act to Amend the Criminal Code (criminal liability of organizations)*.^[139] Like the Australian provisions, with offences requiring negligence such as manslaughter, Bill C-45 uses an aggregation approach. Clause 2 of Bill C-45 amends the *Criminal Code* by adding section 22.1:

22.1 In respect of an offence that requires the prosecution to prove negligence, an organization is a party to the offence if

(a) acting within the scope of their authority

(i) one of its representatives is a party to the offence, or

(ii) two or more of its representatives engage in conduct, whether by act or omission, such that, if it had been the conduct of only one representative, that representative would have been party to the offence; and

(b) the senior officer who is responsible for the aspect of the organization's activities that is relevant to the offence departs - or the senior officers, collectively, depart - markedly from the standard of care that, in the circumstances, could reasonably be expected to prevent a representative of the organization from being a party to the offence.^[140]

Section 22.1 of the *Criminal Code* requires individual or collective negligence of senior officers. It is clear that this is intended to cover conduct similar to the United Kingdom's notion of management failure:^[141]

The heart of [section 22.1] relates to a failure in risk management and within the corporate context, a failure of the organization as a whole to properly implement risk management systems to prevent negligence. The new definition recognizes the organic structure of modern corporations.

The conduct requirement for the New Zealand offence

The provisions of the United Kingdom, Australia and Canada all concentrate on the way in which an organisation's activities are managed. In New Zealand, as well as overseas, death or personal injury resulting from a major disaster is rarely solely caused by the negligence of a single individual. Rather, they are generally the result of failure in systems for controlling risk of harm.^[142] Such systems are the responsibility of management, and therefore *the proposed offence should target failings in such management*. To achieve this, under the proposed offence for New Zealand, an organisation would be guilty of the offence of corporate manslaughter if the way in which any of its activities were *managed* caused death.

Thus, organisations would not be liable for any immediate, operational negligence causing death, or indeed for the unpredictable, maverick acts of its employees (or potentially others). Instead, the proposed offence focuses on how, at a wider and senior management level, activities were organised and managed. It is not limited to examination of an organisation's working practices, but also considers organisational culture. Compared to the identification principle, the 'management failure' principle (borrowing from the United Kingdom's terminology) better reflects the complexities of decision taking and management within large organisations, but it is also relevant for smaller bodies.^[143]

The key inquiry is whether there has been a management failure that has caused death. For example, if a courier driver causes death by dangerous driving in the course of the courier

company's business, this act would not *of itself* involve a management failure so as to incur corporate liability; nor would the company be *vicariously* liable for the driver's negligence. The company might, however, be liable if the incident occurred because the driver was pressured by the company to drive quickly in order to meet excessive delivery quotas, or because he or she consistently worked very long hours in the desire to earn overtime, and the company had no adequate system of monitoring to ensure that this did not happen.[\[144\]](#) It is accepted that there will be some cases in which the jury will have to draw a somewhat fine line between an employee's 'casual' negligence and a management failure. However, as the English Law Commission concluded in relation to the United Kingdom proposals, the distinction between 'management failure' and operational negligence is an appropriate way of differentiating, in the context of involuntary homicide, between the conduct of a corporation and the conduct of its employees alone.[\[145\]](#)

Conduct of the organisation by whom?

A corporate killing offence should focus on the *overall* way in which an activity was being managed or organised by an organisation. More localised or junior management failings should be excluded as a basis for liability (although these might provide evidence of management failings at more senior levels).[\[146\]](#)

The United Kingdom's draft Bill attributes liability to the organisation only for failures by an organisation's 'senior managers' (and similarly in Canada, for the failures of 'senior officers'). 'Senior manager' is defined in clause 2 of the draft Bill:

A person is a 'senior manager' of an organisation if he plays a significant role in-

- (a) the making of decisions about how the whole or a substantial part of its activities are to be managed or organised, or
- (b) the actual managing or organising of the whole or a substantial part of those activities.[\[147\]](#)

The proposed offence for New Zealand adopts this definition. The definition is useful because whether a part of an organisation's activities is 'substantial' will need to be considered in the context of the individual organisation and will depend on its overall scale of activities, recognising the fact that activities forming a substantial part of a smaller organisation will differ from those representing a substantial part of a larger one. Although the focus is not on localised management failings, the management failings of the 'substantial' business of a large company which operates a number of businesses in different locations or industries (each of which may have different policies and management structures) would be covered. Furthermore, by identifying two strands to management responsibility, it ensures that managers who set and monitor workplace practices (those making decisions) as well as those providing operational management (those actually managing those activities) are covered. In either respect, a person must play a significant role in the management responsibility.[\[148\]](#)

It could be argued that a corporation could delegate all of the health and safety responsibilities to lower management who make management decisions or provide operational management for only an insubstantial part in its activities, thereby avoiding prosecution.[\[149\]](#) However, inappropriate delegation itself could be seen as gross negligence.[\[150\]](#) Although concentration on senior managers seems to contradict the earlier contention that the focus should be on the *kind of conduct* that should incur liability, not on the *identity* of the person or persons

responsible for it (which is the focus of the identification doctrine), the difference lies in the fact that the kind of conduct that the proposed offence attempts to incriminate is *management* failure rather than *any* failure. The determination of management failure depends on the acts and omissions of senior managers. In contrast, under the identification doctrine, the focus on the controlling individuals is used to determine *whose* acts and omissions are the acts and omissions of the 'embodiment' of the company, rather than to determine the *kind of conduct* that should incur liability. On the contrary, in relation to the ACT offence, section 12.4 of the *Criminal Code Act 1995* (Cth) does not mention who the conduct may be done by, other than to say that the 'body corporate's conduct is negligent when viewed as a whole.' But the negligence can only be viewed as a whole *if no* individual employee, agent or officer can be shown to be criminally negligent. Woolf points out that this seems to imply that it may be possible to establish corporate negligence by proof of individual negligence without resort to the collective negligence provision. Thus, an individual may be relatively junior or localised but his or her failure (i.e. inadequate corporate management or failure to provide communications) may cause a corporation to be liable.[\[151\]](#) This should not be the effect of New Zealand's offence.

The physical act of killing

The physical element for manslaughter is killing of a human being. Section 12.2 of Part 2.5 of the Australian *Criminal Code Act 1995* (Cth) attributes the 'physical element' of an offence to a corporation if it was committed 'by an employee, agent or officer of a body corporate acting within the actual or apparent scope of his or her employment, or within his or her actual or apparent authority.'

Similarly, s 22.1 of the *Canadian Code* provides that an organisation's 'representatives' who are 'acting within the scope of their authority' are a party to the offence.[\[152\]](#) A 'representative' is a director, partner, employee, member, agent or contractor of the organisation.[\[153\]](#)

For the purposes of the proposed New Zealand offence, no mention is made of the physical element of killing.[\[154\]](#) This is because an organisation should be liable where its management failure led to the commission of the killing, even though it is impossible to identify which particular employee, agent or officer had committed the killing.[\[155\]](#) Furthermore, unlike the Australian and Canadian Codes, an organisation's liability should not depend on whether the killing occurred within the scope of employment or authority.[\[156\]](#) For example, a (renegade) pilot wishes to take his friends on a sightseeing flight. After work hours and without any authority to do so, he steals a plane which belongs to his employer, an air transport company. During the flight he negligently crashes the plane killing all the passengers on board. This act could not be said of itself to involve a management failure and therefore the company will not be liable. Even if it was found that the plane crashed due to some technical failure which was itself caused by a management failure, rather than the pilot's negligence, it could be said that the management failure no longer caused the victims' deaths because the pilot's intervening act broke the chain of causation.[\[157\]](#) But if the pilot believed on reasonable grounds, or entertained a reasonable expectation, that a senior manager had or would have authorised or permitted his actions, this belief or expectation could be proof of a corporate culture that could be considered to be a management failure in itself. Alternatively, if it was clear that the pilot had an irresponsible type of character (which may be evidenced by past convictions), and the company failed to take adequate precautions in hiring the pilot, this may be a management failure in itself.

In these last two scenarios, the pilot was not acting within the scope of his employment or authority.

Causation

An important element of the proposed offence for New Zealand is that the management failure must have caused the victim's death. It is submitted that the ordinary rules of causation in the criminal law should apply to determine this question. Thus, if the jury is satisfied beyond reasonable doubt that the death would not have occurred had it not been for the management failure, the causation element would be proved. However, the offence would not be proved if an intervening act broke the 'chain of causation', and, therefore, the management failure was not itself a cause of death but merely part of events leading up to it. In many, possibly most, cases it will be the operational negligence (rather than a *deliberate* act) of one or more of the organisation's employees that is most closely connected in point of time with the death. However, for there to be a *novus actus interveniens* the employee's conduct must be 'free, deliberate and informed',^[158] and this does not include innocent, accidental or negligent acts.^[159] If the employee's input was not free, deliberate, and informed, an intervention that is reasonably foreseeable (ie. predictable) does not break the chain of causation; but if the intervention was unforeseeable and extraordinary, it is a *novus actus interveniens*.^[160]

Seriousness of the Defendant's Conduct

The proposed offence for New Zealand should be targeted at the most serious management failings that warrant a conviction for manslaughter. A corporation should not be liable for every breach of an organisation's common law and statutory duties to ensure the health and safety of its employees. Additionally, the new offence should not catch organisations that are making proper efforts to operate safely or responsibly or whose efforts do not quite meet appropriate standards.^[161] Furthermore, the offence should be one of last resort, available only when all other existing sanctions seem inappropriate or inadequate, because the negligence involved was very serious.^[162] Therefore, for the proposed offence, there is no reason to depart from the high threshold of gross negligence that the law of gross negligence manslaughter in New Zealand currently requires,^[163] which is that a breach of a reasonable standard of care that was so bad that it should be judged to be criminal and deserving of punishment.^[164] The proposed offence requires a gross breach of the defined duty of care, which constitutes a management failure falling far below what can be reasonably expected of the organisation in the circumstances.^[165]

It follows that the offence of corporate killing should be triable only on indictment, to mark the seriousness of an offence which causes death from conduct which falls *far* below an acceptable standard.^[166] Furthermore, to clarify the meaning of the term 'falling far below' in relation to the United Kingdom's proposed offence, clause 3 of the United Kingdom's draft Bill provides:

(2) In deciding that question [of whether the defendant's conduct falls far below what can reasonably be expected of it in the circumstances] the jury must consider whether the evidence shows that the organisation failed to comply with any relevant health and safety legislation or guidance, and if so-

(a) how serious was the failure to comply;

(b) whether or not senior managers of the organisation-

(i) knew or ought to have known, that the organisation was failing to comply with that legislation or guidance; (ii) were aware, or ought to have been aware, of the risk of death or serious harm posed by the failure to comply; (iii) sought to cause the organisation to profit from that failure.

(4) Subsection (2) does not prevent the jury from having regard to any other matters they consider relevant to the question.

Neither the Australian or Canadian provisions provide any such statutory guidance, and this article rejects the need for it on the basis that it would be neither practicable nor desirable. In every case it would be for the jury to decide when the defendant's conduct could be said to fall far below that which could be reasonably expected of it 'in the circumstances.'^[167] In particular, the requirement under the United Kingdom's draft Bill that the jury must consider whether the organisation sought to profit from its breach in order to find the organisation liable is ambiguous. The clause can be read to mean that a gross breach cannot be found *unless* the defendant sought to profit from its failure, or it could be read to mean that a gross breach can be found *even* if the defendant did not seek to profit from its failure. It is submitted that the former interpretation should not be adopted because there may arise a situation where an organisation, which causes death as a result of gross (management) failure but which is not done with a view to profit, is culpable enough to be made liable of involuntary manslaughter. Indeed, the offence of gross negligence manslaughter by human beings does not require the defendant to have a view to benefit from his or her breach.

The existing offence of gross negligence manslaughter in New Zealand provides no particular guidance for the jury to determine whether the defendant's conduct amounts to gross negligence, and likewise statutory guidance for a corporate killing offence is unnecessary. It is, and should be, a matter for the jury, with guidance from the judge, to decide upon the considerations that are relevant, and the weight attached to them.^[168]

Corporate Liability for the Individual Offence

Clause 13 of the United Kingdom's draft Bill abolishes the application of the existing individual offence of manslaughter by gross negligence to corporations. However, the English Law Commission were of a different view: 'just because it would not normally be *necessary* to charge the corporation with an individual offence, it does not follow that it would never be *appropriate*; still less does it follow that it should not be *possible*.'^[169] The Law Commission pointed out that there may be the occasional case where, although under the identification principle the conduct of the individual responsible is the conduct of the company, it is arguable that the conduct does not amount to a *management* failure. Even where a management failure *is* found, where a case involves a one-person company, there is no reason why it should not continue to be possible for the company to be convicted of the same offence as the individual responsible.

This article, while noting the concerns of Woolf,^[170] supports the Law Commission's view. Under the proposed offence for New Zealand, the prosecution would be able to choose whether to charge a company for the individual offence of gross negligence manslaughter.^[171]

As a general rule, a director or controlling member of a corporation is not criminally liable for the acts of the company simply because of his or her position in the company. It does not follow that because a company may be criminally liable for the acts of its officers acting within the scope of their employment, an individual officer must also be criminally liable.^[172] Generally, an individual officer is criminally liable only if he or she himself or herself committed a crime. The argument for punitive sanctions on company officers of a company found guilty of a corporate killing offence arises from the need to provide sufficient deterrent force to a corporate killing offence; and the need to prevent culpable individuals from setting up new businesses or managing other companies or businesses, thereby leaving the public at risk again. These concerns prompted the English Government in its consultation paper in 2000 to ask for views on whether individual officers 'contributing' to a management failure should face disqualification from acting [as officers or directors of a company].^[173] The English Government also noted that the public interest in encouraging officers to take health and safety issues seriously is so strong that officers should face criminal sanctions in circumstances where, although the company has committed the corporate offence, it is not (for whatever reason) possible to secure a conviction against them for the individual gross negligence manslaughter offence. However, it would not be possible for an individual officer to be made criminally liable on the sole basis of the conviction of an organisation for the corporate offence. The English Government therefore concluded that it would be necessary to create an additional criminal offence in respect of *substantially contributing* to an offence committed by a corporation which lead to the death of a person.^[174] In the end, the English Government declined to enact punitive sanctions against individuals or enact a separate offence. Clause 1(5) of the United Kingdom's draft Bill states that 'an individual cannot be guilty of aiding, abetting, counselling or procuring an offence of corporate manslaughter.'^[175]

In contrast, in addition to the 'employer' offence, the [Crimes Act 1900](#) (ACT) provides a 'senior officer' offence of 'industrial manslaughter.' Section 49D provides that a senior officer of an employer commits an offence if:

- (d) A worker of the employer -
 - (i) dies in the course of employment by, or providing services to, or in relation to, the employer; or
 - (ii) is injured in the course of employment by, or providing services to, or in relation to, the employer and later dies; and
- (e) the senior officer's conduct causes the death of the worker; and
- (f) the senior officer is -
 - (i) reckless about causing serious harm to the worker, or any other worker of the employer, by the conduct; or
 - (ii) negligent about causing the death of the worker, or any other worker of the employer, by the conduct.

Senior officers are liable to a maximum fine of \$200,000, or to a maximum prison sentence of 20 years, or both.^[176] The ACT's Minister for Industrial Relations stressed that the senior officer offence was not based on vicarious liability. The senior officer offence 'will only apply if

the officer's *own* conduct caused the death of a worker,'[\[177\]](#) so that the officer will not be held responsible for the negligent or reckless actions of others, nor for the failure of the employer's systems to prevent the death of a worker.[\[178\]](#) Additionally, in Canada, a duty of reasonable care for the safety of workers or others has been codified by Bill C-45. Section 217.1 of the *Criminal Code* now provides:

217.1 Every one who undertakes, or has the authority, to direct how another person does work or performs a task is under a legal duty to take reasonable steps to prevent bodily harm to that person, or any other person, arising from that work or task.

A breach of this duty is not in itself a criminal offence but may become an offence if the breach of duty is done with criminal negligence defined in s 219 of the Code as 'wanton or reckless disregard for the lives or safety of other persons.' The relevant charge would then be criminal negligence causing death under s 220; criminal negligence causing bodily harm under s 221; or manslaughter under s 222(5)(a) (killing by an unlawful act), all of which are punishable by imprisonment.

It is submitted that neither a separate offence like those in the ACT and in Canada, nor punitive sanctions for individuals should be enacted in New Zealand, for several reasons. First, the individual manslaughter offence in New Zealand is punishable by imprisonment for life only.[\[179\]](#) It can be argued that the availability of a fine or other penalties, such as disqualification, against individuals, devalues a workplace death over a death outside work, and counteracts any symbolic value that accrues from having an offence directed at workspace fatalities.[\[180\]](#) Second, the ACT senior officer offence can be criticised. Wheelwright writes that

[t]he senior officer offence in the ACT legislation is very narrow and adds nothing to the manslaughter laws already applying to individuals in the ACT, except that the senior officer offence applies specifically in the workplace. The officer's conduct must have caused the death directly in circumstances meeting the tests of recklessness or criminal negligence. It is highly unlikely these requirements will be satisfied in the workplace context.[\[181\]](#)

Similarly, section 217.1 of the Canadian *Criminal Code* can be criticised because liability arises only for an individual's *own* breach of duty - it is not related to an organisation's breach of duty - and such breaches of duty are already covered by gross negligence manslaughter. The ACT and Canadian provisions contrast with the English Government's proposals in 2000 to enact an offence for individuals who substantially contribute to an organisation's liability for the corporate offence. A provision imposing liability on the officers of a company is commonly included in legislation creating an offence which is likely to be committed by a corporation.[\[182\]](#) However, the question of whether individuals should be criminally liable for the gross negligence of the *organisation* is 'a very difficult one, even in regulatory statutes',[\[183\]](#) but especially for manslaughter. Therefore, for New Zealand's purposes, any such proposed offence should be avoided.

Moreover, the requirements of a separate offence, or to have punitive sanctions against individuals for the corporate offence, would be difficult: proving, for example, that an officer 'contributed' to a management failure (as the English Government proposed) is potentially complicated and the concept of contribution to a management failure is vague. Finally, in relation to adopting punitive sanctions against individuals (without considering a separate

offence), this article supports the view that it would be inappropriate for an offence that deliberately focuses on the liability of the corporation itself, to include punitive sanctions for individuals. However, under the proposed offence for New Zealand, individuals within the company could still be concurrently liable with the company for the individual offence of gross negligence manslaughter and *Health and Safety in Employment Act 1992* offences; and regardless of whether they are individually liable, their conduct might still be relevant to any case against the company for the corporate offence.

Relationship Between the Proposed Offence and the Health and Safety in Employment Act 1992

Where an organisation is indicted for the offence proposed in this article, the provisions of the *Health and Safety in Employment Act 1992* would still apply to those that are currently affected by the Act.[\[184\]](#) In contrast with the employer's liability under s 6 of the Act, under the proposed offence the organisation would not be automatically liable for the negligence (however gross) of an employee. A management failure must be proved.[\[185\]](#)

An Illustration of the Proposed Corporate Manslaughter Offence

To demonstrate how the proposed offence will operate in practice, reference is made to the 1987 Zeebrugge ferry disaster which prompted the corporate manslaughter debate in the United Kingdom.[\[186\]](#) A ferry, *Herald of Free Enterprise*, capsized with the loss of 150 passengers and 38 crew members. The immediate cause of the capsizing was that the ferry had set sail with her inner and outer bow doors open. The assistant bosun had fallen asleep in his cabin and missed the 'Harbour Stations' call to shut the doors. The Chief Officer, as loading officer of the G deck, was under a duty to ensure that the bow doors were closed, but he interpreted this as a duty to ensure that the assistant bosun was at the controls. The report of the inquiry into the disaster ('the Sheen Report') said that the Chief Officer's failure to ensure that the doors were closed was the most immediate fault that led directly or indirectly to the disaster.[\[187\]](#)

The Master of the ferry was responsible for the safety of the ship and those on board, and thus the inquiry found that he was responsible for losing the ship. However, he had followed the system approved by the Senior Master, and no mention was made in the company's 'Ship's Standing Orders' to the closing of the doors. The Senior Master failed to enforce issued orders, and also failed to issue orders relating to the closing of the bow doors on G deck. The Sheen Report found that he 'should have introduced a fail-safe system.' Furthermore, this was not the first occasion that one of the company's ships had gone out to sea with its doors open, and management had not acted upon earlier incident reports. The Sheen Report's criticism went further than just to those on board the ferry:[\[188\]](#)

The Board of Directors did not appreciate their responsibility for the safe management of their ships ... There appears to have been a lack of thought about the way in which the *Herald* ought to have been organised for the Dover/Zeebrugge run. *All concerned in management*, from the members of the Board of Directors down to the junior superintendents, were guilty of fault in that they all must be regarded as sharing responsibility for the failure of management. *From top to bottom the body corporate was infected with the disease of sloppiness ... The failure on the part of the shore management to give proper and clear directions was a contributory cause of the disaster.*

As explained above,[\[189\]](#) the prosecution against P & O European Ferries (Dover) Ltd failed. In order to convict the company of manslaughter, one of the individual defendants who could be 'identified' with the company had to himself or herself be guilty of manslaughter.[\[190\]](#) Because there was insufficient evidence on which to convict any of those individual defendants, the case against the company had to fail.[\[191\]](#) If the same facts came before a court again, it is submitted that it would probably be open to a jury to conclude beyond reasonable doubt:

- that the company owed a duty of care to its crew and passengers;
- that the company was in breach of that duty of care because of the way its senior managers, the shore management, managed or organised a particular aspect of its activities, that is, they failed to devise a safe system for the operation of the company's ferries;
- that this management failure caused the resulting deaths, even if the immediate cause of the deaths was the conduct of the assistant bosun, the Chief Officer or both; and
- that the breach of duty fell far below what could reasonably have been expected of the company in the circumstances.

If these same circumstances occurred in New Zealand, the company could be convicted of the offence proposed in this article.

Sentencing an Organisation

This section will only briefly consider the complex issue of sentencing organisational offenders.[\[192\]](#) There are four main sentencing options:[\[193\]](#) fine,[\[194\]](#) adverse publicity,[\[195\]](#) corporate probation,[\[196\]](#) and incapacitation and restraint.[\[197\]](#)

The United Kingdom's Corporate Manslaughter Bill and the Canadian *Criminal Code* impose unlimited fines for conviction of corporate manslaughter.[\[198\]](#) Unlimited fines seem appropriate because a person has been killed, and the deterrent effect of a fine will vary greatly with the size and nature of the organisation.[\[199\]](#) There is a danger that for some large organisations a fine will simply be seen to be a cost of doing business: 'a public morality tax.'[\[200\]](#) However, there is the problem of a 'deterrence trap': once a certain monetary level is reached the company will become insolvent and the fine will likely go unpaid. An 'equity fine' can avoid this problem.[\[201\]](#) Furthermore, even where a company is able to absorb a large fine, there is the problem of 'overspill': that is, the phenomenon that the higher the fine the more likely the cost and burden of the fine will fall onto shareholders, creditors, employees (if the fine is severe enough to result in cutting staff) and consumers (through increased prices).

Therefore, new creative types of penalties for organisations are being developed around the world which may better meet the deterrent and retributive functions of the criminal law where the offender is an organisation.[\[202\]](#) In relation to the ACT offence, s 49E of the [Crimes Act 1900](#) (ACT) states:

(2) In addition to or instead of any other penalty the court may impose on the corporation, the court may order the corporation to do 1 or more of the following:

(a) take any action stated by the court to publicise—

(i) the offence; and

(ii) the deaths or serious injuries or other consequences resulting from or

- related to the conduct from which the offence arose; and (iii) any penalties imposed, or other orders made, because of the offence;
- (b) take any action stated by the court to notify 1 or more stated people of the matters mentioned in paragraph (a);
- (c) do stated things or establish or carry out a stated project for the public benefit even if the project is unrelated to the offence.

Example for par (a)

advertise on television or in a daily newspaper

Example for par (b)

publish a notice in an annual report or distribute a notice to shareholders of the corporation Example for par (c) develop and operate a community service[\[203\]](#)

Such adverse publicity orders are welcome, bringing home to convicted organisations the stigma of a manslaughter conviction and thus provide a significant deterrent effect, both specific and general, which may encourage rehabilitation.[\[204\]](#)

Moreover, the sanctions discussed so far, if they have any rehabilitative effect at all, leave it to the corporation to decide how it will respond to the sanction. In cases involving death, it is desirable to enforce change by subjecting the organisation to a period of probation. The United Kingdom's Corporate Manslaughter Bill allows the courts to impose remedial orders on offending organisations, requiring that specific remedial action be taken to address, within a specified time, the failures that led to death. Canada's Bill C-45 introduces into the Canadian *Criminal Code* a new s 732.1(3.1), which contains a list of conditions that a probation order for an 'organisation' may prescribe. A court may order an organisation to:[\[205\]](#)

- make restitution to victims of the offence;[\[206\]](#)
- carry out adverse publicity;
- implement policies and procedures to reduce the likelihood of further criminal activity;
- communicate those policies and procedures to employees;
- name a senior officer to oversee the implementation of those policies and procedures; and
- report to the court on the implementation of those policies and procedures.

Although not without its problems and criticisms,[\[207\]](#) the notion of corporate probation is appealing in order to enforce remedial and rehabilitative change in an offending organisation.

The fourth sentencing option, incapacitation and restraint, aims to replicate imprisonment (which is the punishment for individuals who are convicted of homicide) for organisations. The essence of imprisonment is restraint and there are a number of ways in which the business of an organisation may be restrained. For example:[\[208\]](#)

- ceasing certain commercial activities for a particular period or in a particular geographic region;
- revocation or suspension of licences;
- disqualification from certain contracts, especially government contracts; or
- freezing the organisation's profits.

Furthermore, the gravity of the offence of corporate manslaughter arguably justifies that a corporation be subject to the corporate equivalent of capital punishment, that is, deregistration. However, with both incapacitation and restraint, the problem of overspill is likely to be considerable and, in the case of medium to large corporations, would often be too great to justify such sanctions.^[209] Therefore, the offence proposed by this article would not include these sanctions. In general, this article supports the use of unlimited fines, adverse publicity and corporate probation as punishment for its proposed offence in New Zealand.

VII. Conclusion

Public and workplace disasters 'graphically demonstrate the shattering impact of corporate misconduct upon human life.'^[210] However, the current law in New Zealand fails to hold accountable at fault organisations in an effective way. It is obviously not ideal to await the occurrence of such disasters before pressing the case for law reform. This article has concluded that the best option for reform is to enact a special corporate manslaughter offence in New Zealand. Due to the inadequacy of the *Health and Safety in Employment Act 1992*, and the existence of large, complex organisations in this country, the basis of liability for the proposed offence is a failure by senior management of a corporation to organise and develop its systems, arrangements and culture to avoid serious harm to others. The concept of management failure recognises the fact that death is rarely solely caused by individual operational negligence, and ideally reflects the complex decision making structures of organisations that the identification principle fails to address. The proposed offence is designed to be a new and effective way to target the worst cases of management failure which cause death to workers or members of public.

This article has drawn on the proposals made overseas in an attempt to develop an offence which is suitable for New Zealand. However, these overseas proposals have yet to be tested and their effect is presently unknown. The same can be said of this article's proposed offence. Furthermore, many issues relating to the proposed offence have not been discussed, such as territorial application and jurisdiction; who, in fact, should investigate and prosecute the offence; enforcement of the offence; and the effect of insolvency and dissolution of companies during criminal proceedings. Moreover, the regulatory impact of the offence in New Zealand needs to be examined.^[211]

Nevertheless, this article has highlighted some of the important issues surrounding corporate manslaughter. In particular, in relation to the sentencing of organisations, New Zealand has the opportunity to be proactive and novel in adopting punishments that will best promote remedial and rehabilitative change in our offending organisations.

There is a current lack of academic debate in New Zealand on corporate manslaughter. It is hoped that this article will stimulate discussion, and ultimately place corporate manslaughter on the legislative agenda. The time has come for organisations that have paid little regard to the safety of their workers and members of the public to be held accountable in New Zealand in an effective and meaningful way. An offence of corporate manslaughter would have this effect.

Emotional Communication and Values in Human Rights Advocacy



The compassion of our society is measured by how we treat our most marginalised members.

Most people will not come across the most marginalised people often. Active human rights advocates will be meeting these people often and need the skills to be able to understand their lives and situations.



In most cases, we will be advocating to governments or organisations that have a limited total budget. What is given to one person, cannot be given to others. This means that in our advocacy, we need to balance the degree of support that we give to the different people and families that seek our services.

To find an equitable balance, requires us to quantify the apparent needs of the people we serve and what we ask for from service providers. To quantify is to place relative values onto different people's needs. To do this fairly, we must have a good and fair understanding of the Quality of Life of all of the people we wish to serve, assessed by their own values.

How can we compare needs that lie in different spaces? This is comparing apples with oranges, but to do our tasks well, we do need to try to do this.

How much emotion should we allow to exist within us, as we try to find this balance? Often we are exhorted to reject emotion completely and stick only to "the facts". In these intensely human situations, such an exhortation may lead us to fail to support properly some vulnerable cases. We must share our effort equitably between all people who are seeking help.



To leave no-one behind, requires careful balance. How do we balance, between apples and oranges and avocados?

Advocacy seeks to empower marginalised people to gather information, to understand it, to understand the situation they are in and to make decisions that will take care of their interests as they see them or to advocate to decision-makers to protect their interests.

The advocate may act as a translator, between the culture of the person, to the culture of the decision-maker. Advocates may be able to have more influence than a person speaking on their own behalf, due to the suspicion that humans have when listening to a person advocating for them self.

Some examples of advocacy may be extremely high stakes, for example death penalty hearings, or deportation hearings. For a person or family who are insecure for income, money for next weeks food is high stakes.

This is especially true where lack of food is not just uncomfortable, but impeding and endangering their children's development, in ways that will stay with that child for the rest of their life. Some people in NZ today, are experiencing medical problems that result from their mother's starvation in The Netherlands, after World War 2.

It is an old law adage, copied from the Italian proverb of Che s'insegna, &c. that **the man who is his own lawyer has a fool for his client.**

>>>>The saying is not as true as lawyers might have you believe, but still it is a useful warning. The decider, the person that we are advocating to, is more likely to listen to an advocate (who is culturally similar to the decider), than to listen to marginalised person's own words.





In most cases, people acting as advocates do not have personal experience of the total situation of the marginalised person being advocated for. In essence, to understand the person's experience and situation will require communication across some form of cultural barrier. Our goal is to be able to walk several steps in their shoes, to see out of their eyes, hear through their ears and perhaps to feel what their heart feels, to empathise.

To advocate for what the client wants, values or needs the most, requires that the advocate have more than a cursory qualitative emotional understanding of the client. The emotional understanding must be quantitative, to follow the values of the client (not the advocate!). We must serve the marginalised person, as they wish to be served.

Situations of extreme social challenge always come with extreme emotional pressure and fear too. This is what our client is facing. Fear is often a potent block on clear communication. The advocate must listen all the more clearly, to hear exactly what the marginalised person wishes to communicate. Fear leads to defensive behaviours, where people restrict the information that they communicate out. Fear also makes it harder for the listener to hear with accurate perspective.

This sounds simple, but life experience shows that the barrier is usually more difficult to surmount than it appears at first. The barriers are more complex than just listening to the words. It should involve emotional understanding, so that the apparent facts can be understood in the light of the values of the person being advocated for and their culture.

These values may be quite different to the advocate's values. The advocate needs to be able to pick up and understand how the marginalised person's values interact with the facts of the situation.

Where the facts of the situation invoke some degree of fear in the listener, the listening becomes much more challenging and it may go completely off the rails or even be completely blocked.

If satisfactory emotional understanding has not been obtained, the advocate is poorly placed to be successful in advocating for the client.



Breastfeeding woman told to “cover up”.

Fear is a potent communication blocker, especially for affective communication of values, culture and emotions. Fear distorts assessment of risk and this cognitive bias may derail the quality of the decision made.

Advocacy is aimed at persuading a decision-maker to make a more favourable decision for the person(s) being advocated for. When the decision is yes/no, a small difference in the advocate's skill can have a huge impact for the recipient. This can be seen in guilty/not guilty verdicts or in treat/no treatment in a hospital.

The wider social situation will often be a zero-sum game, where a favourable decision for this person will impose costs or losses onto someone else. This effect may be direct or indirect.

"IN ORDER TO EMPATHIZE WITH
SOMEONE'S EXPERIENCE YOU MUST
BE WILLING TO BELIEVE THEM AS
THEY SEE IT AND NOT HOW YOU
IMAGINE THEIR EXPERIENCE TO BE"

-BRENÉ BROWN

As advocates, we usually try to be fair to all parties. This is a somewhat arbitrary value judgement at best. At worst, our prejudices may override the affectual information about culture, values and emotions.

The Golden Rule is often stated as do unto others, as you would have them do to you. This simple statement is reasonable when all parties values and culture are similar. But when parties have quite different values, the altruistic form of the Golden Rule must be followed, to not do harm. This has never been stated in a simple form. It comes down to treating all parties with a similar degree of respect and care, as judged by their own values.

Although a decision-maker may try to be careful in gathering information and analysing a situation, the actual making of the decision requires an emotional acceptance and confidence in the decision. The last step of making the decision is affective ie emotional. Yes, I will do it!!!

In an ideal world, the advocate needs to have factual knowledge and affective knowledge of the person's situation, values and culture. Without all of those, they are less likely to be able to advocate for the person, in the way that the person desires to be advocated for.

It is no accident that being a good neighbour involves being able to listen patiently with minimal judgement being made. This is encouraged in workplaces for mutual mental health support. But our society has become very competitive and extremely judgemental, quite the opposite of being a good neighbour. As a result, our population mental health has reduced in the last half century.

We are often exhorted to not be mired in emotion, just cut to the facts. This attitude is perhaps acceptable in everyday mono-cultural business. But it is not the way to succeed for your client, as an advocate. We need to be

good neighbours, able to listen to emotions as much as to facts and without getting them confused. To do so with compassion, without shutting down emotionally. If we are to "leave no-one behind", we need to maintain our balance and judgement. Although we should not be too judgemental, we need to retain our balanced judgement.

In a sense, the advocate is a decision-maker too. They must allocate their own time and resources among several people who seek their help. These decisions are also contributed to by affective knowledge. If the advocate is aiming to achieve social equity, they must prioritise based on how they choose to allocate their time and resources. These decisions are fundamental to appropriate allocations and to the final outcomes.

As advocate, we aim to empower the marginalised client. Our goal is to share knowledge about the world, to empower the marginalised person to make their own decision about how to proceed, to serve their values. Clear communication requires us to value diversity and not be scared of it.

Equity can only be a workable goal, if the advocate has a reasonable understanding of the culture, values and facts of all of the advocate's marginalised clients. Where these cultures are different, then understanding is required to achieve an equitable outcome. It is easy to devalue what we don't understand and very hard to properly value what we don't understand. The end result of insufficient emotional understanding, is an outcome that is probably not equitable.

To implement the concept of equity, such as "equal opportunity" or "no-one left behind", we need wide and deep cultural understanding of all parties. Easy to say, certainly not easy to do. If we can walk several steps in their shoes, see out of their eyes, hear through their ears and feel what their heart feels, then we might just be able to exercise wisdom like Solomon..

To listen effectively, we need to understand our own fears and know how we can manage any issues that come out of our fears. Then we are free to listen carefully and clearly and to make appropriate decisions with confidence.

Affect or emotion is somewhat less important when dealing with people of our own culture, but still is important.

When we are dealing with high stakes decisions impacting onto every aspect of a person's life, we must take account that every individual has distinct culture and values. As a whole being, this can only be communicated and put into perspective through balancing affect and facts.

We can only be conceived through dramatic affect. All of the big dramas of our lives are played out through affect and our deaths bring out intense affect too.

As advocates, we must manage emotion as carefully and appropriately as we manage the facts of a situation.

>>>Unaware clienting - explain the issue not by
example<<<<< ??????

A victim should not have to rescue a rescuer

As an illustration of the blocking power of fear, one Friday evening a young man in my office dived into a friend's home pool. He hit his head on the concrete pool bottom and broke his spinal cord. Fortunately, he came to the

surface and floated with his mouth open to the air. A person of the house came in and found the situation that he was now in. All appropriate medical actions were taken and he was delivered to the hospital alive.

I visited. I was horrified to see this fit, strong, healthy, kind, active man in this situation, with this prognosis.

I love swimming, running, cycling, ice skating, walking outside, rough physical play with children and all of these things appeared to me to be out of reach for him. I was physically shocked to my core, I felt fear for what he would need to face. Fortunately, I was among other visitors, so my reactions hopefully were not too visible. For a period of time, my ability to hear what he was saying, was blocked by my fear.

I was also shocked by his cool acceptance and positively focussing on what he could still do. Perhaps his new life would focus onto areas he would have shown little or no interest in before, he said. The losses were not a problem, he would make the best of it.

I tried to manage my feelings, my fear. I hoped that my feelings were not too apparent and that I resolved my fears in a number of minutes. I hope so, for his sake. Then I was able to listen to where this young man was and where he wanted to go.

I suspect that he had been warned about people's likely reactions. He certainly didn't do anything to make my adjustment more challenging. He should not have to think or worry about other people's reactions. The victim should not have to rescue a "rescuer".

Performing well at the total task of being an advocate, , requires emotional self-knowledge and familiarity with emotions around other people's life situations. To be able to walk in their shoes, requires we be emotionally strong and flexible.

If we see human rights support as being based in legislation, we will probably miss the points our clients are most worried about. We must establish a relationship in which they feel safe to communicate to us.

Many marginalised clients asking for human rights support have lived through situations of almost unbelievable harshness and danger, much more so than a locally born person. To listen is a challenge to our own humanity.

When we try to walk a few steps in their shoes and feel what their heart feels, we face a challenge that comes from inside our self.

Can we face their reality?

Can we handle our own pain, to get to be able to listen to their pain?

Can we handle, to feel their pain for a few minutes? We probably will feel fear, outrage, frustration, injustice and many other emotions.

Ostensibly we are serving the marginalised client. We grow as we learn to face their challenges.

Advocacy tactics:

Information politics: quickly and credibly generating politically usable information and moving it to where it will have the most impact.

Symbolic politics: calling upon symbols, actions, or stories that make sense of a situation for an audience that is frequently far away.

Leverage politics: calling upon powerful actors to affect a situation where weaker members of a network are unlikely to have influence.

Accountability politics: efforts to hold powerful actors to their previously stated policies or principles.

In each of these tactics, communications will be presented with different degrees of emotional content, alongside the relevant facts.

Lord Kelvin 1824–1907

British scientist

When you can measure what you are speaking about, and express it in numbers, you know something about it; but when you cannot measure it, when you cannot express it in numbers, your knowledge is of a meagre and unsatisfactory kind: it may be the beginning of knowledge, but you have scarcely, in your thoughts, advanced to the stage of *science*, whatever the matter may be.

Popular Lectures and Addresses vol. 1 (1889) 'Electrical Units of Measurement', delivered 3 May 1883

Although we don't have rulers marked for measuring emotions, to be effective advocates we do need to be able to put emotions into perspective, with our own values and all of our marginalised client's values

Whilst we should not be too judgemental, we do need to make sufficient judgement, to make sense of what we are trying to do and to balance our activities between the needs of all of the marginalised clients.

The American social scientist Daniel Yankelovich described the descent into measurement hell that may result from the "curse of Kelvin":

"The first step is to measure whatever can be easily measured. This is OK as far as it goes.

The second step is to disregard that which can't be measured or give it an arbitrary quantitative value. This is artificial and misleading.

The third step is to presume that what can't be measured easily isn't very important. This is blindness.

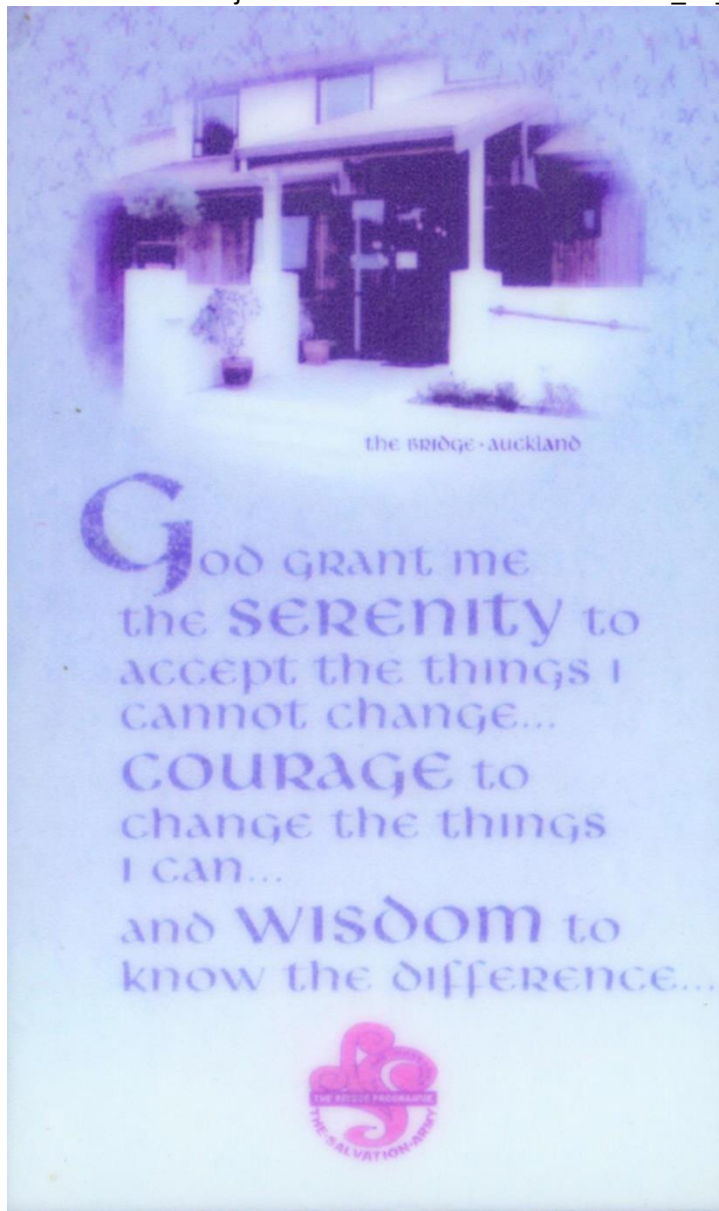
The fourth step is to say that what can't be easily measured doesn't really exist. This is suicide."

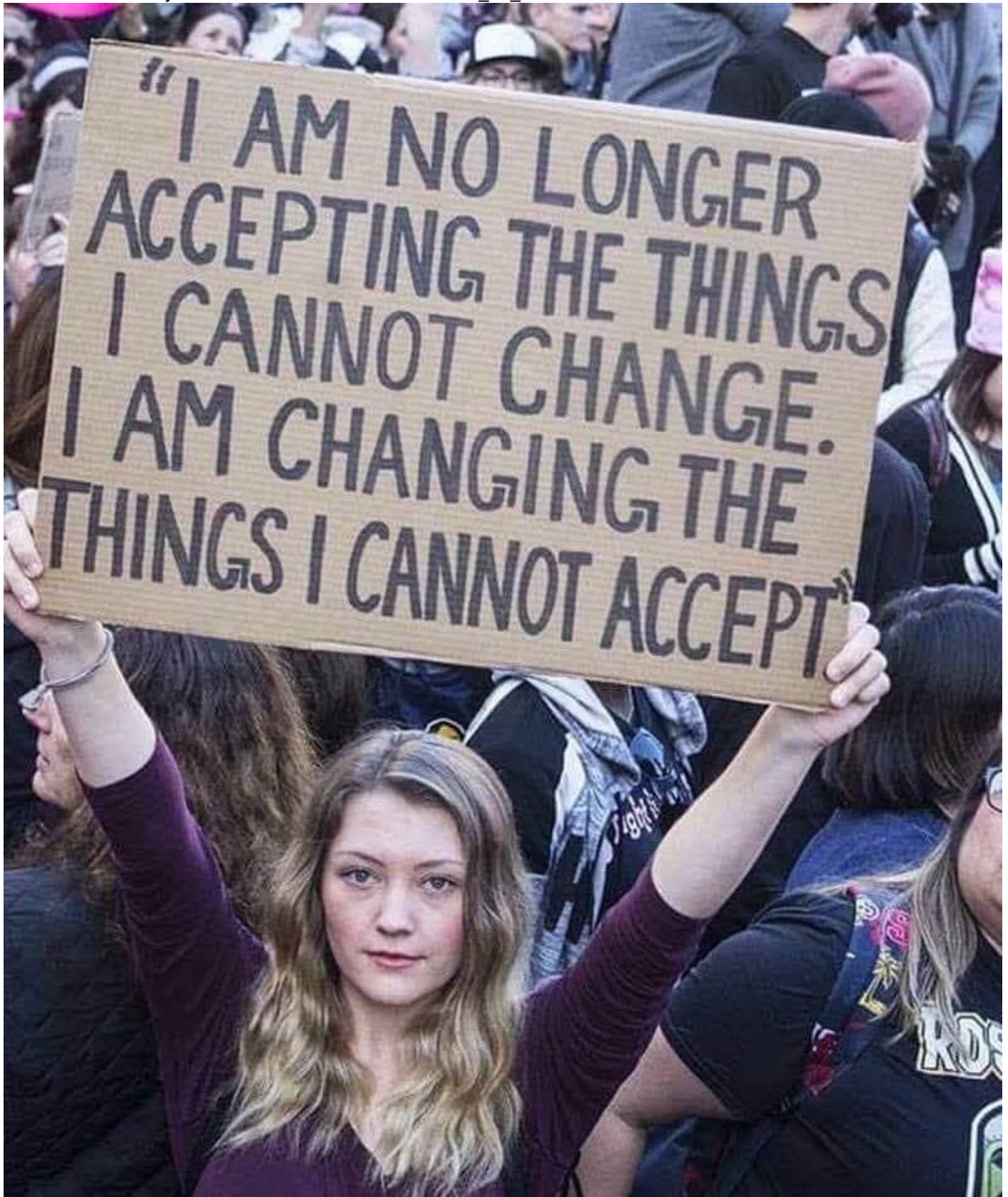
We need to find the best balance between including emotions and possibly being overwhelmed by emotions. To honour the concept of "Leave No-one Behind", we need to balance facts and emotions.

Active human rights advocates will be meeting marginalised people frequently. As a result advocates are highly challenged to walk even a few steps in the shoes of these marginalised people.

Lets work together, to face these challenges.

Advocacy, mediating, ally-ship and negotiating skills are subtle and broad. Learning them ranges from classroom, reading books, watching videos, practice and reflection after every experience. Mentors may provide guidance too.





Brené Brown's Life Advice on Emotions

Brené Brown is a research professor at the University of Houston. Brown has spent the past two decades studying courage, vulnerability, shame and empathy. She's the author of #1 New York Times bestsellers: The Gifts of Imperfection, Daring Greatly, Braving the Wilderness.

Brene Brown's SECRET To Healing YOURSELF & MAKING AN IMPACT ON THE WORLD!

The Most Eye Opening 10 Minutes Of Your Life by Brené Brown

The price of invulnerability Brené Brown at TEDxKC

The power of vulnerability Brené Brown TEDxHouston

Brené Brown — The Courage to Be Vulnerable

Know Your Worth and Where You Belong I Brené Brown

Listening to shame Brené Brown

BRENÉ BROWN'S TOP 10 RULES FOR SELF LOVE

Brené Brown's Life Advice

Emotions expert Brené Brown says the emotion to be 'very wary of' is contempt [OTHERING]

Brené Brown How to "Brave the Wilderness" & Find True Belonging

Brené Brown Why Your Critics Aren't The Ones Who Count

Brené Brown Daring Classrooms SXSWedu 2017

Brene Brown Discusses 'Atlas Of The Heart,' Her New Book About Emotions

Choosing to Listen – Listening through our guilt, our pain and our privilege

Advocates and **Allies** do need to choose to be actively involved. Passive listening is rarely of much help to advocate for a marginalised person.

Teamwork requires significant mutual understanding. In a cross-cultural context, this is much more complex than in a mono-cultural situation.

When we consider all of the different types of culture that exist within our society, ethnic, language, disability, skin colour, religion and others too, not many relationships are actually mono-cultural.

Many relationships may appear to a glance, to be mono-cultural, but a more careful look at the relationship in most cases will disclose multi-cultural issues that are present. In some situations, the cultural disparity may have no impact. It requires a lot of cultural understanding to see ahead how issues will impact onto a working relationship.

The impression of NZ being a mono-cultural society is just a lazy self-delusion, by people who are not prepared to put in the effort to build reliable and safe relationships.

To be effective allies or advocates, we need to be sensitive to these issues and active in addressing these issues as they arise.

Listening to marginalised people will usually involve actively listening to stories which include suffering and pain, to walk in their shoes for a little time. This does take willingness to feel their pain, to understand it and understand the implications and consequences that flow from it.

It opens the question, could I bear their life, if I was dropped into that situation? This is a large challenge, if we wish to be useful allies or advocates. We should know that in real life, aging could drop us into some of these circumstances. This is a scary prospect and opens up our **fear**. Fear is a potent barrier to accurate communications, especially listening.

If we are clearly different to them, do we have the patience to listen through their experiences? Do we **trust** them enough, to invest our time into helping someone, quite different to ourself?

Elvis Presley song - If you could see you through my eyes

If I could be you, if you could be me
For just one hour
If we could find a way
To get inside each other's mind, uh huh

If you could see you through my eyes
Instead of your ego
I believe you'd be, I believe you'd be
Surprised to see
That you've been blind, uh huh

Walk a mile in my shoes
Just walk a mile in my shoes
And before you abuse, criticize and accuse
Just walk a mile in my shoes

Now, if we spend the day
Throwing stones at one another
'Cause I don't think, 'cause I don't think
Or wear my hair same way you do, uh huh

Well, I may be common people
But I'm your brother
And when you strike out through tryna hurt me
It's hurtin' you, Lord have mercy

Walk a mile in my shoes
Just walk a mile in my shoes
Yeah, before you abuse, criticize and accuse
Just walk a mile in my shoes

Now, there are people on reservations
And out in the ghetto
And brother, there
But for the grace of God
Go you and I, uh huh

Uh, if I only had the wings
Of a little angel
Don't you know I'd fly
To the top of the mountain
And then I'd cry, cry, cry

Walk a mile in my shoes
Just walk a mile in my shoes
Yeah, before you abuse, criticize and accuse
Walk a mile in my shoes

Walk a mile in my shoes
Just walk a mile in my shoes
Yeah, before you abuse, criticize and accuse
Walk a mile in my shoes

Source: [LyricFind](#)

Songwriters: Joe South

Walk a Mile in My Shoes lyrics © Concord Music Publishing LLC, Peermusic Publishing

What Happens When You Tell Your Story and I Tell Mine?

Sometimes, empathy isn't enough. New research reveals how taking and giving perspectives can help us to bridge our differences.

BY **ZAID JILANI** | JANUARY 9, 2020

https://greatergood.berkeley.edu/article/item/What_Happens_When_You_Tell_Your_Story_and_Tell_Mine#thank-influence

As a white man who grew up in Texas, John Howard Griffin was curious about the lives of African Americans who lived under America's Jim Crow system in the late 1950s. So, he embarked on a bold experiment. He decided to darken his skin, live as a black man, and write a book informing his fellow white citizens about how it feels to be on the other side of the racial divide.

"How else except by becoming a Negro could a white man hope to learn the truth?" he wrote on the first page of the book, titled *Black Like Me*. "The Southern Negro will not tell the white man the truth. He long ago learned that if he speaks a truth unpleasing to the white, the white will make life miserable for him. The only way I could see to bridge the gap between us was to become a Negro." Published in 1961, *Black Like Me* went on to sell 10 million copies all over the world.



John Howard Griffin, author of *Black Like Me*, in both his guises.

Psychologists have a name for Griffin's experiment: perspective taking, which involves being able to see the point of view of someone you normally consider to be part of an outgroup. Griffin decided he needed to be able to see the world from the perspective of a black man in order to more fully understand African Americans and their struggle for civil rights.

But Griffin didn't just take someone else's perspective. He also gave a perspective to countless white Americans who had never considered what it was like to live under America's system of anti-black discrimination. Research is finding that this "perspective giving"—being able to offer another point of

view, especially if you're part of an outgroup—can be just as important to social change as perspective taking.

Of course, *Black Like Me* could never supplant the voices of African Americans themselves. As activist Stokely Carmichael (later known as Kwame Ture) said at the time, *Black Like Me* “is an excellent book—for whites.”

According to Griffin himself, his memoir was meant only as a bridge for European Americans who had trouble listening to African Americans, in hopes that it could open their hearts and minds to the experiences of other people. His book stands today as an extraordinary experiment in both perspective taking and perspective giving.

Together, they're powerful tools for bridging our differences, particularly between groups that may not have an equal power dynamic. When a perspective has been marginalized by the larger society, says Beyond Conflict Innovation Lab lead scientist Emile Bruneau, it's important to allow that one to come forward first—and for members of the dominant group to then try to take it in before giving their own. Bruneau and other researchers are studying perspective taking and perspective giving in domestic and international contexts. What they're finding could help more Americans negotiate their differences.

Empathy isn't enough

Perspective taking is not precisely the same thing as empathy—and if you're trying to build bridges between different groups, it's important to understand the difference. We often think about emotional empathy as being able to feel someone else's emotions, whether it's the pain of a friend or the joy of a family member. But empathy has its limits.

In late 2019, a group of researchers [set out to test](#) the impact of empathy on polarization between Democrats and Republicans. First, they used survey data gathered in 2016 to see how individuals with greater empathic concern would feel toward partisans on the other side, using measures of social distance, such as how upset they would feel if a family member married a member of the opposite party. The researchers also ran experiments to measure how empathic concern affects partisan bias in situations like wanting to censor a speaker from the opposite political side.



Elizabeth Simas, associate professor at the University of Houston.

While we might hope that empathy would fuel tolerance, that's not what this study found. According to lead author Elizabeth Simas, an associate professor at the University of Houston, empathic concern did seem to be associated with less discomfort with the other side—but at the same time, it came with more negative feelings. Those higher in empathic concern expressed a greater desire to censor out-party speakers, as well as “more *schadenfreude* when a person was injured trying to hear a speaker from the opposite party.”

That means that emotional empathy—trying to feel what someone else is feeling—was not found to be particularly useful in reducing polarization. In fact, it appeared to make things worse.

Why? One of the problems with emotional empathy is that we tend to feel it more towards ingroups—people like us and people we can relate to—than to outgroups, who seem so different from us. If our ingroup is attacked by an outgroup, empathic concern doesn't necessarily help. But we shouldn't confuse emotional empathy, which is often based on gut responses, with perspective taking, which asks us to do the *conscious and intellectual* work of taking the viewpoint of our opponents, even if we have no emotional warmth towards them.

“Empathic concern is an emotional form of empathy, while perspective taking is a more cognitive form of empathy,” says Simas. “That is, empathic concern involves reacting to another's suffering with feelings of sympathy or compassion. In contrast, perspective taking does not involve an emotional reaction to another person's situation.” The goal isn't to feel what they're feeling. Instead, it's to understand why they feel the way they do.

That doesn't mean that empathy is useless. It can help us grow closer to people, especially our loved ones. But we should be wary of its downsides, and be cognizant of the reality that sometimes it is more appropriate to engage in perspective taking instead. This seems to be particularly true of trying to understand our opponents.

Perspectives across borders

Many of our conflicts take place across international borders, which divide people into warring or skeptical camps. But what if we were able to see the situation from the point of view of adversaries?

That's the question Bruneau and MIT neuroscientist Rebecca Saxe sought to answer in a [2012 study](#) that looked at how perspective taking and perspective giving can help bridge divides.



University of Pennsylvania psychologist Emile Bruneau.

Bruneau says he originally became interested in the topic when he was teaching high school many years ago. He'd host "dialogue sessions" between white and non-white kids.

"And what seemed to happen is the white kids would take a lot from these experiences, because they would be exposed to perspectives they'd never considered before," says Bruneau. But the non-white kids (who were a minority in this school) would generally gain less from the experience, perhaps because they were in an environment where they were already exposed to majority points of view constantly.

So, Bruneau developed a hypothesis that perspective taking "wouldn't really work for members of a minority or marginalized group." But he also came to wonder if combining perspective taking with perspective giving could help bridge divides between members of majority and minority groups.

In their study, Bruneau and Saxe brought together two pairs of groups across international borders. They took Mexican immigrants and white Americans, and Israelis and Palestinians, and put them through a set of experiments that involved both perspective taking and perspective giving.

In the Middle East, Bruneau was shocked at how little interaction there was between the groups. “The first [Palestinian participant] after the study came up and thanked me and said, ‘I’d never had the opportunity to talk with an Israeli before,’” he says. “That was shocking to me just because we were standing in Ramallah, which is eight miles away from Israel.”

With both pairs of groups, the researchers found that dominant group attitudes toward the minority improved significantly after hearing their perspective. Meanwhile, the chance to give their perspective seemed to help the minority group members to see the majority in a more positive light.

The fact that both experiments showed similar results despite different cultural and geopolitical contexts suggests the one-two punch of perspective giving and perspective taking can prove effective across divides in a multitude of situations.

Although Bruneau’s research suggests that perspective giving is more valuable for minority or marginalized groups while perspective taking is more valuable for majority or dominant groups, he says that in practice, it’s probably best for participants to do both—but it’s the group with less social power who should go first. “That serves the psychological needs of both sides,” he says.

Giving and taking

Organizations in the United States are putting these scientific insights to work in closing America’s political divide.

When Nashville, Tennessee, found itself divided over rising immigration and diversity, the Tennessee Immigrant and Refugee Rights Coalition created [Welcoming Tennessee](#), which set out on an ambitious project aimed at integrating the immigrant population into the region, largely by sharing stories and perspectives.



At "Refugee Day on the Hill," members of the Tennessee Immigrant and Refugee Rights Coalition take their stories directly to state legislators.

Thanks to the work of Welcoming Tennessee, the city's social and political climate dramatically changed in a matter of a few years. In 2009, campaigners pushed a ballot initiative that would have required all government documents to be conducted in English only. But thanks partly to the work of Welcoming Tennessee, the ballot measure failed, with 57 percent of voters coming out against it. In 2014, Nashville opened an Office of New Americans, specifically tasked with working with immigrants and refugees to help them acclimate to life in the city. One of the programs the city runs now dispatches Parent Ambassadors—volunteers who come from the same country or share a native language—to work with immigrant families and help them navigate the school system.

This local work was so successful that the effort went nationwide. Since 2009, Welcoming America has been working with communities all over the country to help them overcome skepticism towards immigrants and refugees.

Welcoming America taps local community figures—municipal officials, civil society leaders, and refugees and immigrants themselves—to help move communities across what the organization calls the “welcoming spectrum.” The goal is to bring communities from “fearful” to “tolerant” to, finally, “welcoming.”

A key part of this work is empowering immigrants and refugees to tell their own story to elected officials and others.

For instance, their One Region Initiative—which aims to build a more inclusive culture for immigrants and refugees in the Atlanta, Georgia, area—held a series of listening sessions that included 142 participants, who ranged from documented and undocumented immigrants to refugees to U.S.-born citizens.

These sessions allowed the organization to directly hear from people whose lives were affected by their policymaking.

Welcoming America identified several key concerns from these sessions, with the top two being a lack of English proficiency and fear of deportation. The listening sessions also generated ideas for a plan of action, which included a question-and-answer session with local elected officials, as well as more conversations across racial divides.

Rachel Peric, the executive director of Welcoming America, says that the events help “people understand that while they may share a common humanity, their experiences may be different, and I think those stories and the active listening to those stories sets the stage for policymakers to understand how people are differently impacted by all kinds of policy.”

If you would like to practice the skill of taking in other people’s perspectives, Welcoming America is a great place to start. We have also profiled other organizations that will allow you to practice this skill, from the [One America Movement](#), which facilitates dialogue between political partisans, to the [website AllSides](#), which is designed to allow you to see how people across the political spectrum view news events.

If John Griffin could risk discrimination, expulsion, or worse to see how his fellow Americans of African descent lived their lives, we should be willing to step out of our comfort zones and consider the power of perspective taking. And although we don’t live in the mid-20th century American South and the era of Jim Crow, the lessons of Griffin’s bold experiment are relevant in all sorts of contexts. As he writes in a 1979 look back on *Black Like Me*:

All human beings face the same fundamental problems of loving and of suffering, of striving toward human aspirations for themselves and their children, of simply being and inevitably dying. These are the basic truths in all people, the common denominators of all cultures and all races and all ethnic categories...

I believe that before we can truly dialogue with one another we must first perceive intellectually, and then at the profoundest emotional level, that there is no Other—that the Other is simply Oneself in all the significant essentials.

This alone is the key that can unlock the prison of culture.

About the Author



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Zaid Jilani is *Greater Good's* [Bridging Differences](#) Writing Fellow. A journalist originally from Atlanta, he has worked as a reporter for *The Intercept* and as a reporter-blogger for ThinkProgress, United Republic, the Progressive Change Campaign Committee, and *Alternet*.

These words sound straightforward and simple and ethically beyond question.

Take care of widows, the poor and the insane.

These words have been beyond question for more than 4 thousand years, though with more gaps in time than solid observance.

But the Devil is in the detail. The saying “Leave No-one Behind” is surprisingly subtle and complex to apply in our diverse, real world. It has been used as a cry to “End Extreme Poverty”. This is a straightforward and simple objective, surely the values involved are beyond dispute?

It all comes back to open, careful, respectful listening and then acting sensitively on that.

In our own mind, we must not create other people as “other”.

We tend to respect others as we would want to be respected, rather than as they wish to be respected.

It is said that - values are behind our eyes? This is a challenge to how open we can be.

The UN proposes the Multidimensional Poverty Index as a set of values for comparing different people’s comparative needs, on a fair basis.

Leave No-one Behind

This is an expression that those with power or fitness should give every possible support and protection to the weak and vulnerable. **To give care and protection is to dispel fear.**

The saying does not clearly specify **whose** values should be used to judge?

If the people relating are of one culture, likely there is no problem? But given all of the various aspects of culture, religion, language, ethnicity, sex, gender, colour - the idea of monoculture doesn’t really exist in our real world. We do have to face that even in a group of people who look the same, there will be quite a wide divergence of values. If we want a society in which everyone participates on an equal basis, we have to listen to each person’s values. If we want to support marginalised or vulnerable people, this is essential to being successful at offering support.

Respectful listening can only be based on respect for the other person’s values.

The saying “Leave No-one Behind” is an old war cry of the US Military Services.

The U.S. military has made a sacred commitment to leave no one behind on the battlefield. This ethos is even embedded in the Airman’s Creed (“I will never leave an airman behind”) and the Soldier’s Creed (“I will never leave a fallen comrade”). If a downed pilot isn’t rescued within an hour, their chance of survival drops to about 50-50 and plummets rapidly. This commitment is clear, but at times may be impossible to attain.

2nd time – tank crew hear incoming missile alarm, sudden extreme change in power balance. They are out on the street and at risk even from small arms fire.

In advocating for human rights for people, we will often end up comparing apples with oranges. Is it better to be deaf or to be blind?

To apply a different standard to different people would be hypocrisy. But how do we apply the same standard to different situations?

2nd time around truck of soldiers takes off suddenly, leaving one man behind, running in vain to catch up.... Again this is a sudden change in power.

“Swapping chairs” is a technique often used in counselling, to help a person to think through the other person’s situation and perhaps values too. In these scratchings, I will invite you to feel through “other” people’s points of view. I hope that you can gain understanding, so that people different to yourself are not so often reduced to “other”. It is an invitation to walk a while, in their shoes or wheelchair. The pain is worth it.

Equality of Opportunity

It is said that the humanity of a society may be judged from how it cares for its most vulnerable or marginalised members.

Image of scales of justice

The problem for marginalised or disenfranchised people is not so much to “access” justice, but just to be heard at all. This may sound like a trivial problem, if you don’t have experience of being not listened to, because you are “other”. Getting in the door of a courtroom is relatively straightforward, but to be listened to with equal standing is the problem that usually determines the outcome.

There are none so blind, as will not see.

Jeremiah 5:21 Hear now this, O foolish people, and without understanding; which have eyes, and see not; which have ears, and hear not.

Admiral Horatio Nelson turned a blind eye to his telescope, to avoid seeing the flags ordering him to give up. Nice story. But going through the motions of being listened to in court, when you suspect that you are not being listened to, is an experience of injustice.

A feeling that the other person is “other” ie from an inferior or persecuted group, usually prevents their words from being heard and understood. Paying lip-service to listening, but not trying to understand what is being said – is not **respectful** listening. Swapping chairs does help to put us into the other person’s shoes. We may be asked to speak, as if we were them.....

The fact that these issues were not being properly handled, led to the Geneva Convention on War.

Conventionally, the victor gets to write history and the story of the marginalised or vulnerable remains untold. And that is how we “educate” our children. This is failing to “swap chairs”.

Altruistic Form of The Golden Rule

It is common to talk about The Golden Rule as simply “Do unto others, as you would have them do unto you”.

Easy to say but too often it doesn't result in the quality of outcome that we should be aiming for.

This simple form assumes that the other person wants to be treated as I want to be treated. This might be true in a simple mono-cultural world, but it is lazy and unsuccessful in the real world that we live in. This has been known and recorded since 2400 BCE and the solution too.

Even between women and men supposedly of one culture, the mono-cultural Golden Rule often falls to pieces. We should aim higher, for a better world.

When we wish to protect a person's human rights or create reconciliation between groups of people, we need to look clearly at each person's values and how well they were respected. This is open to differing viewpoints and varying willingness to see another person's viewpoint.

“Do unto others, as you would have them do unto you” essentially makes an assumption that both people have the same values. Especially in situations of dispute, this will usually not be the case. In simpler situations, a legal set of values may be applied equally to both parties, but often the subtleties of human life will be outside of these standardised legal values.

To make our society more supportive, we need to listen in a culturally sensitive manner. To give care and protection is to dispel fear. Can we “swap chairs”?

“Treat others with the respect, that you hope they will treat you” is an improvement, but it is open to a wide range of understandings. The biggest issue is how we behave, when we have limited knowledge about the other person's culture. Even within an apparently mono-cultural group, when we remember that there are differences of attitude and experience, relating to religion, ethnicity, sex, gender, capabilities and enjoyments.

By directly facing these issues, we are better placed to **treat the other person with respect that they will appreciate.**

Privilege and Fragility

A very convenient barrier to being willing to understand another person's values, is seeing them as “other”, different and inferior. Then their values don't “need” to be respected, compared to my own.

Another barrier to listening to the other person's values, is not knowing enough to be able to pick up what they are saying. Not speaking the same language is the extreme example, but simply being of different cultures is a more subtle example. Why don't they simply live by my culture is not listening openly.

For these reasons, it is very easy to get bogged down in non-productive arguments.

Traditionally history was written by the victor. The complaints of the vanquished were slowly forgotten as time passed and mainly not addressed at all. When long periods of time have passed, it becomes more and more difficult to sensibly provide redress.

Our law says that theft does not transfer legal ownership, yet we turn a blind eye to historic claims where redress was refused at the time. This is obviously hypocrisy, but the powerful majority are able to get away with this. The grievance is left smouldering. Just get over it, that was in the past ! They are still benefiting and don't want any changes.

This is very convenient and advantageous for the powerful. But that is no excuse for simply forgetting about the grievance and killing the people making these claims. As time goes by, such grievances may become stronger. If there is a major change in power structures, then these grievances may come to the fore and result in a new set of killings of the previously powerful. The Balkans have had at least 2500 years of such power changes and killings, or genocides, as various invading powers swept through their country and turned the power structure of their society on its head. This has built up intense grievances and left the society a powder keg for internal killings, abuse and genocide.

Looking at the long term consequences, it is worth addressing these types of wrongs. In many cases, the people benefiting will only take part in reconciliation negotiations if forced by circumstances or some legal authority.

The power structure of our society is not a simple top down hierarchy. In differing situations the power structures may play out very differently and we must be sensitive and take this into account in advocacy or ally-ship work.

Men may have privilege for better wages, but when it comes to issues around military conscriptions they are vulnerable and weak. If sick or dying or very young, again they may be weak or vulnerable.

Parties may refuse to acknowledge their contribution to a problem, or the ways in which they took benefit from a situation.

Fragility is the refusal of the advantaged party to even discuss these issues on an equitable basis. It is their refusal to walk even a small distance in the other party's shoes. When this refusal is problematic, then they refuse to listen to the other party – "other". In these intractable situations, they may be willing to listen to an ally, that is a person they are willing to listen to and respect as a person – the opposite of "other".

Resolving disputes takes lots of patient listening. It may need to put protagonists into swapped seat situations, to pressure them to understand each other's viewpoints, situations and values.

Another example of fragility was the general refusal of counsellors in NZ before 1990 to accept that women could perpetrate sexual crimes against children. If boys ever opened up to counsellors, they were often abused by the counsellors as being liars. Police treated such boys similarly, of you were so lucky !! This dynamic can be seen as women counsellors refusing to accept that women could do such things to children.

In the time since, it has become clear that those boys were telling the truth. Nowadays counsellors do listen appropriately to boys complaining about sexual abuse by women.

Another example of Female Privilege is women not being subject to compulsory military conscription.

When men refuse to acknowledge male privilege and how they have taken advantage, they are acting with Male Fragility.

Fragility is the blunt refusal to walk in the other person's shoes, or to swap seats for a short time.

Being Vulnerable or Weak

We are all born small, weak and vulnerable. We will be completely dependent on our parents for several years, as we grow in capability and strength. To give care and protection is to dispel fear.

Most of us will die vulnerable and weak.

If we are fortunate, we may be strong and powerful for a time in our life. Even then, in a moment we may become weak and vulnerable again.

As children, some will have suffered sexual abuse or physical neglect or emotional neglect. Some of that abuse may have been by our own parents.

Jesus simply implored us to look after the weak or vulnerable. He didn't discuss blaming victims for their plight, certainly not judging them critically for the situation that they find themselves in.

As a society we have limited resources for helping. To help to the best extent, we do have to judge the situations so that help may be given for the best outcomes. These judgements need to be made, so that our help is given out equitably, not equally or the like.

This will involve values – whose values?

Traditionally, there were lists of what help was given for what situation, very simplified compared to the range of human situations that we come across. In many cases, multiple problems were helped only according to the single worst problem. Yet it was clear that multiple problems were much more serious than the help being given. At times, the inequity becomes obviously gross and inequitable.

We are trying to compare apples with oranges and there is often no clear answer. As well as the actual weaknesses, different people's values result that inappropriate help was being given. The decider's values were driving the decisions made, not sensitivity to the recipient's values. This is another example of the difference between the multicultural form of the Golden Rule and the monocultural form.

To make these decisions equitably, we need to be able to walk a distance in their shoes, or wheelchair. We need to see the world, as they see it.

Even if we only advocate or support, we still have to make decisions about who we will give our time or resources to.

Even this short term identifying may be scary or painful. Can we do it at all? Can we go a short distance in their world? Swapping seats may help us to understand, but even then it is just for a short time, with a good escape route. It isn't really the same at all.

We need to go further than waving our hands in the air and making generalisations about vulnerability and weakness. We need to make allocation decisions in individual cases, with claimants yelling in our ear.

How do we handle individual cases fairly?

If we cannot see the disability, it may be very easy to fail to understand it at all, let alone to be able to weigh it appropriately.

If society discriminates against these people, they may be under extreme pressure to not show their disability. Even if we can gain their trust, they will be so inexperienced at being open about the disability, that it is very hard for them to communicate clearly and openly to us. It is very difficult for us to gain appropriate understanding, to be able to advocate for them or support them. We may lack the language to describe such a situation, to communicate to others what is the problem.

Worse still, if we simply refuse to believe them at all. ???

If we as observer are blinded by our own superiority, then we have discounted them as “other”. We have built a barrier so that we cannot listen to them, but we may be unaware of this barrier. It is hard to climb over a barrier that we cannot acknowledge, even if we built it ourselves !!!

There are none so blind, as will not see.

Jeremiah 5:21 Hear now this, O foolish people, and without understanding; which have eyes, and see not; which have ears, and hear not.

We can only listen openly if we are able to give human respect – the opposite of discounting as “other”. Only if we can respect all faces of their culture. These faces include language, religion, skin colour, tastes, gender, sex....

It is difficult to respect what we don't understand, or don't even know exists. We have to climb over our assumptions, tastes and massive lack of knowledge.

Vandals destroy things that they don't understand the value of. It is very easy to be a social vandal, it takes much care to not be a vandal. It takes humility to listen openly over the top of our own feelings of superiority.

If we are scared to listen to another person's reality, then we have the largest barrier of all to climb over.

If listening will open us up to uncomfortable personal realities, then we have a huge barrier to work with. If listening would expose the privileged advantages we have enjoyed, it will be very uncomfortable to listen to stories from someone who suffered from lack of those privileges. Even worse if it exposes unethical actions we have taken eg stealing from others in some way. We may be extremely reluctant to listen to such stories. This is fragility. It may be white fragility, if the issue is racial prejudice. It may be able fragility, if the issue is able prejudice.

If we dismiss the speaker as “other” in some way, we will never allow ourselves to hear what they are saying.

The only way that the person speaking has a chance to be heard, is by speaking through a respected advocate or ally, who is not seen as “other”, by the fragile, privileged person.

A wise person can learn from a fool, but a fool cannot learn from a wise person !

If listening to a person would involve empathising through their pain, we may not be willing to face their pain. We have a free choice, they don't. “Swapping chairs” is not easy.....

It does take quite a lot of personal strength to listen to painful stories. To listen carefully enough, to be able to compare such stories, to make appropriate decisions. Why choose to feel such pain?

It is only through listening carefully, that we can hope to make appropriate decisions.

It is only through appreciating the cultures around us, that we can act appropriately for vulnerable people.

I have discussed emotions of pain and fear. Emotions may be very strong motivators to action. But to act appropriately, we must restrain ourselves and act when we are confident that we understand and we can make a safe and constructive decision?

We need to pause before we pull the trigger. Maybe we need to cool off our own emotions and reactions. Do we know the whole story? Do we need to gather more information or check with someone else? Are there other solutions that we haven't considered? Are we self-regulating?

We can change the world more by careful and slow actions, than by rushing in and acting loudly or dangerously.

Fools rush in (where angels fear to tread).

Religious Reversion to Using Fear for Control

When we look back through history at all of the times that philosophers and religious leaders have proposed the altruistic form of the Golden Rule, most of the leaders that have followed on have reverted to the simplistic form of the Golden Rule, the non-altruistic form.

Some religions have carefully maintained the altruistic form, notably Zoroastrianism 2000 BCE, Judaism (prior to the State of Israel), Druze, Ahmadiyya Islam, Society of Friends (Quakers), Unitarian Church, Bahá' and Buddhists.

These churches are notable for their devotion to peace, justice, caring for the weak and vulnerable and for respecting other religions and not aggressively proselytizing.

Why have follow-on religious leaders and dictators reverted to the non-altruistic form of the Golden Rule? It is because they want to have Ruler's Prerogative and to rule using fear. To give care and protection is to dispel fear.

In choosing ruler's prerogative to come before human rights for everyone, they protect their own non-accountability, power and privilege, at the price of sacrificing altruism and respecting others.

Fear unfortunately is a powerful emotion, which inhibits our own agency and decision-making capability.

1 Corinthians 13 1

Love is patient, love is kind. It does not envy, it does not boast, it is not proud. It is not rude, it is not self-seeking, it is not easily angered, it keeps no record of wrongs. Love does not delight in evil but rejoices with the truth.

Changes in the Dominant Group in Society

Most of us have only lived under one dominant group in our society. Such changes usually only occur a small number of times in anyone's lifetime. In the Balkans, such changes have occurred about 50??? Times in 2500 years of recorded history. The new dominant group had little respect for the previously dominant group.

These sudden changes of societal power were accompanied by settling of old scores, tortures and genocides. Frequently there was little warning of what was coming. Over this long period of time, unsettled scores turned into intercultural hatred, that festered and could burst into flame with no warning. 1990s wars

In the last 100 years we have had 2 world wars and many skirmishes that affected much smaller areas.

Tank crew escaping from tank when it is about to be hit by a missile.... They went from powerful to dead in half a second.

By contrast Alexander the Great around 300 BCE chose to respect his subjugated people's religions and didn't force religious conversions. As long as they didn't fight back and paid his taxes, he was happy and could do what he wanted with minimal interference.

He didn't really do it out of love or respect, more just that this tolerance made societies easier to control. Ruler's Prerogative still came first, he still had the first choice of the boys, his military needs came first. The respect he gave, gave him fewer rebellions that needed to be put down, his empire ran more smoothly.

After the Greek Empire had collapsed and as the Roman Empire was collapsing hundreds of years later, greek ethnic citizens were slaughtered in outlying areas, as a consequence of grievance by then 300 years old. The Greek Genocide in Turkey ?? other places lost several million lives, though the grievances were 3 centuries old.

Sudden changes in power structure may unleash much cruelty, if old grievances have not been reconciled. The sudden power changes put people into swapped seats and their behaviour changed in an instant. After death, there isn't much reconciliation or learning.

Genocide in the Breakup of Yugoslavia

A harsh example of fragility was the publicly displayed in the breakup of Yugoslavia in the early 1990s. Tito had ruled with an iron fist as a dictator. Although he held the different ethnicities together and achieved cooperation and successful social and economic development, they had not reconciled the impacts of two and a half millennia of alternate conquering by neighbouring civilisations. These cruel conquests had built up an accumulation of hatred and distrust between the different ethnicities. Although under Tito, these rarely boiled over into killings, the fuel was still there and smouldering. On Tito's death, the Orthodox christian Serbs effectively took over and using their majority threatened the minority groups. They had control of the Yugoslav Army, its guns and ammunition.

They decided to murder the Moslems and Croatians in the area and launched rape and murder campaigns. Centuries of unresolved hatred and abuse, burst into cruel action.

There were several wars, mostly bare hands against military rifles and rapists. After the wars had stopped, actions were investigated by EU war crimes investigators. The EU tried to hand over the prosecutions to the successor governments, to prosecute the war criminals living within their territories. This handover was unsuccessful, in that those governments, in particular the Government of Serbia followed through with the prosecutions so slowly, that most cases became un-prosecutable due to the deaths of witnesses by old age. The Serbian Government effectively

refused to prosecute, even though they had accepted this responsibility under the articles of accession to the EU. This failure was foreseeable, given that the Serbian Government leaders had very close links to the war criminals.

Some of the war crimes trials were carried out in The Hague, of the most serious war criminals. At these trials, none pleaded guilty when provided with copies of evidence to be presented in the trial (discovery). As the trials proceeded, some of the lower level war criminals did change their plea to guilty. They were able to see, from the viewpoint of time passing, that their actions were criminal, abusive and that the emotional encouragements at the time were not justified when looked at more slowly. They, as young men, had been swept along in the emotions and hate of the moment. They accepted their sentences and apologised to their victims.

The remaining war criminals went on to the completion of their trials and all were found guilty of some or all of their charges. They often abused their victims at the end of the trial and still maintained that their actions were justifiable. They were unable to see their victims as people with human rights. They refused to attempt to reconcile in any way and they totally refused to see their victims point of view.

The younger men who could now see the gravity of their crimes, did at least take what small actions they could to apologise and reconcile for their deeds. They said that they now regretted that they had done those actions. With time to reconsider and better opportunity to understand their victims, they now understood why their earlier decisions were unacceptable.

Speaking when you have no direct power

Lady giving occupying Russian soldier sunflower seeds. Put these in your pocket, when you die these will grow ! She has no power at all, he has a gun and can use it with no accountability.

He doesn't want to listen. He orders her to move on and stop hassling him, but to no effect. He does everything possible to not listen, but to no effect. She is speaking truth and affect, to his short term power.

She is speaking a language that he cannot ignore, of his death, the language of the greatest fear to a soldier, even with a gun. The great personal risk that she is taking only adds poignancy to what she is saying. The soldier knows that she is speaking the truth in every sense. She does not have immediate power, but she has called in power over the soldier, that he is fairly powerless to control. The only power she has, is the obvious fact that at any moment he might die. The contrast of plant life, that goes on with beauty contrasts with the soldier's vulnerability.

Video of captured Russian soldier surrounded by civilian women. Tell me your mother's phone number...The young soldier had no agency in the first place, he was conscripted. He certainly has very little agency as a PoW and a very uncertain future.

As we watch these videos, can we "swap chairs" with each of the protagonists?

Video of older woman civilian abusing occupying Russian soldiers at a protest. Who invited you here? If you are uninvited, you should go home !!!

She is brave, foolhardy even. She knows the risks of being shot or raped. She has seen dead bodies littering the streets and probably seen cold blooded shootings happen. She has the power of truth and her words evoke guilt in the soldiers, even though they don't want to listen to her words. They know that if positions were swapped around, they would feel just the same. Her words cut through the thickest of skins. They cannot help but to hear her, unless they are totally emotionally dead.

Without a possibility of a sudden change in power positions, or support from an ally, the marginalised person has very little opportunity to be heard.

Marginalisation and Privilege

If we add up all of the forms of vulnerability or weakness, it adds up to roughly 70% of all citizens. Why then are so many people so powerless?

Said the other way around, how can a small minority exercise so much power and not-listening?

From time immemorial rulers have used divide and conquer. Royal Prerogative has always come before human rights of everyday people. Rulers have been ruthless to protect their power.

With vulnerable and marginalised people, they are usually not much capable or unwilling to support each other. Thus they leave themselves even more vulnerable. We find it hard to work together.

Protecting Human Rights

In general, it human rights are the right to healthy development as a human being, without undue interference from other people and in so far as it respects other people's freedoms, right to healthy development and protection.

The sharpest tests of the quality of human rights protection, are:

How well the most marginalised members of society are cared for, treated and protected?

Which receives priority, ruler's prerogative or human rights protections of citizens?

We will see that human rights protections have been given to the most powerful and privileged first. Other groups have received human rights protections in the order of those who least needed protection first. In the USA, women received human rights protections after black men and the legal arguments used were leveraged off black men's human rights protections and that women should have no less human rights protections than black men. Even more poignant, is that those protections supposedly enjoyed by black men were more illusory than real, but that was enough to eventually lead to women receiving human rights protections. (Now we have the situation where the compliment could be reversed, black men could validly argue that they should have no less working human rights protections, than women !!! But that hasn't happened yet.)

The Code of Hamurabi 1750 BCE is one of the earliest legal codes that we have access to today.

But such even-handed justice was not always the case. The punishments vary significantly in relation to the status of the criminal and the victim. If a physician accidentally kills a free man, for instance, the doctor's hands will be cut off. If a physician kills a slave, however, they need only replace the slave. Similarly, if a free-born man strikes someone of equal rank, he must pay a penalty in gold. But if a slave strikes a free-born man, the slave's ear must be cut off.

We also see how rigidly segmented Mesopotamian society was. Slaves were at the bottom, but could be freed in some cases. Men born free had the most rights, while women were subject to additional restrictions on what they could own and what freedoms they had.

Women, too, dealt with more restrictive laws. If a woman neglected and left her husband, she might be cast into the water; if a husband neglected his wife, his only punishment was that she could leave him. Men were also allowed to take another wife if their first wife bore them no children (though the law did stipulate that he must continue to care for her). But some protections for women did exist. If a wife became sick, the husband was forbidden from leaving her, for example; and if a man divorced his wife, she had rights to some of his property in some cases.

The Code assumes a person's innocence, for example, pending evidence to the contrary. The Mesopotamian legal system gave both accused and accuser a chance to state their cases before a judge.

<https://www.discovermagazine.com/the-sciences/how-the-ancient-code-of-hammurabi-reveals-a-society-both-similar-and-alien>

It says that everyone should expect access to justice, so it implies that all citizens are protected. Its punishments are very harsh, an eye for an eye. This strongly hints that Royal Prerogative is actually the most important principle and protecting subjects is quite secondary.

Nonetheless, it is a significant start towards offering equal human rights protections to all citizens.

Code Justinian 534 CE Eastern Roman Empire Byzantium

Code Napoleon 1804 Napoleonic reforms

The development of the Napoleonic Code was a fundamental change in the nature of the civil law legal system, making laws clearer and more accessible. It also superseded the former conflict between royal legislative power and, particularly in the final years before the Revolution, protests by judges representing views and privileges of the social classes to which they belonged. Such conflict led the Revolutionaries to take a negative view of judges making law.

This is reflected in the Napoleonic Code provision prohibiting judges from deciding a case by way of introducing a general rule (Article 5), since the creation of general rules is an exercise of legislative and not of judicial power. In theory, there is thus no case law in France. However, the courts still had to fill in the gaps in the laws and regulations and, indeed, were prohibited from refusing to do so (Article 4). Moreover, both the code and legislation have required judicial interpretation. Thus a vast body of case law has come into existence. There is no rule of stare decisis.

The preliminary article of the Code established certain important provisions regarding the rule of law. Laws could be applied only if they had been duly promulgated, and then only if they had been published officially (including provisions for publishing delays, given the means of communication available at the time). Thus, no secret laws were authorized. It prohibited ex post facto laws (i.e. laws that apply to events that occurred before their introduction). The code also prohibited judges from refusing justice on grounds of insufficiency of the law, thereby encouraging them to interpret the law. On the other hand, it prohibited judges from passing general judgements of a legislative value (see above). [8]

With regard to family, the Code established the supremacy of the husband over his wife and children, which was the general legal situation in Europe at the time. Women had even fewer rights than children. Divorce by mutual consent was abolished in 1804.[9]

The French Revolution's Declaration of the Rights of Man and of the Citizen declared that suspects were presumed to be innocent until they had been declared guilty by a court. A concern of Bonaparte's was the possibility of arbitrary arrest, or excessive remand (imprisonment prior to a trial). Bonaparte remarked that care should be taken to preserve personal freedoms, especially when the case was before the Imperial Court: "these courts would have a great strength, they should be prohibited from abusing this situation against weak citizens without connections." However, remand still was the usual procedure for defendants suspected of serious crimes such as murder.

https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Napoleonic_Code

The biggest barrier to protecting marginalised or vulnerable people, is the plain refusal of privileged people to listen to their requests and pleas, let alone to provide care. That refusal to “swap chairs”.

No-one is above the law, but the Royal Prerogative still applies!

Looking through history, we have found only limited protection of individual human rights.

In reading about altruism ideas in the ancient world, in all humility keep in mind how our Western society traditionally has tended to see these countries and cultures as inferior. Here, I am carefully placing them as ethically superior and worthy of us learning from them, if we can?

Ancient Egypt

Possibly the earliest affirmation of the maxim of reciprocity, reflecting the ancient Egyptian goddess Ma'at, appears in the story of "The Eloquent Peasant", which dates to the Middle Kingdom (c. 2040–1650 BCE):

https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/The_Eloquent_Peasant

"Now this is the command: Do to the doer to make him do." [9][10] This proverb embodies the do ut des principle. [11] A Late Period (c. 664–323 BCE) papyrus contains an early negative affirmation of the Golden Rule: "That which you hate to be done to you, do not do to another."

Ancient Iran

<https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Zoroastrianism>

If we look back to ancient Iran, Zoroastrianism was the state religion approximately from 600 BCE to 650 CE. Its roots go back to at least 2000 BCE. Zoroastrian theology includes foremost the importance of following the Threefold Path of Asha revolving around Good Thoughts, Good Words, and Good Deeds. There is also a heavy emphasis on spreading happiness, mostly through charity, and respecting the spiritual equality and duty of both men and women. Zoroastrianism's emphasis on the protection and veneration of nature and its elements has led some to proclaim it as the "world's first proponent of ecology."

The core teachings of Zoroastrianism include:

Following the threefold path of Asha: Humata, Hūxta, Huvarshta (lit. 'good thoughts, good words, good deeds'). [40]

Practicing charity to keep one's soul aligned with Asha and thus with spreading happiness.

The spiritual equality and duty of men and women alike.

Being good for the sake of goodness and without the hope of reward (altruism).

The Golden Rule is a well-entrenched concept in Zoroastrian ethics. It has been advocated and practiced throughout the history of its moral philosophy, a history imbued with remarkable verve and vigour, and conveying a sense of realism and high seriousness to moral life. The very idea of a radical distinction between the good and the bad is an essential source of this vigour. The goal of Zoroastrian ethics is summed up in the triad of "good thought, good word, good action," and constitutes the foundation for faith. These virtues imply thinking and speaking about the world as an ordered cosmos created by the Good Spirit, performing the acts required to maintain this sense of equilibrium, and conducting a virtuous life by implementing truth, purity, the right measure, and god-given order.



The Jewish faith built on these altruistic foundations (and later too the Islamic faith).

Hillel the Elder born 100 BCE dies 10 CE emphasised humility and respect and to turn the other cheek to offense.

Hillel encouraged that we should respect others the way that they wish to be respected by us. His work was influential in the Judaism faith.

Recent NZ History of Human Rights Protection

Even in “modern” democracies, we see various forms of royal prerogative overriding the human rights of ordinary citizens and certainly of marginalised members of society, even where these human rights are protected by “black and white” legislation. We see this in the East and in the West. True democracy is a rare beast.

The quality of a democracy cannot be evaluated on paper, by reading legislation. What matters is what actually happens in Parliament and in the courts. Are they listening to the will of the people, are outcomes set by a privileged few, when push meets shove?

In recent NZ history, The Right Honourable Sir Piggy Muldoon used information supplied to him by members of the NZ Security Intelligence Service, to publicly humiliate Colin Moyle as a possible homosexual. At that time homosexual acts by men were a criminal offence. It was illegal for members of the NZSIS to spend their time surveilling NZ citizens, unless they were believed to be acting out treason or disposing of State secrets, which Colin Moyle did not even have access to at that time. It was illegal for such information to be passed on to the Prime Minister and illegal for the Prime Minister to use such information in such a way.

In the years since, the legislation has been tightened up and such activities turned into explicit crimes and Parliamentary oversight can now be more effective. Even so, no action was taken by the Speaker of Parliament to censure the Prime Minister for obviously unethical behaviour and breaching NZ’s Constitution. Very low marks for NZ democracy.

A number of Aucklanders were prosecuted and jailed for child sexual abuse, on the basis of medical evidence that was later totally discredited. I am not aware that the earlier cases were revisited and the victims released from jail. In many of these cases, the affected mothers had established new intimate relationships, while their husbands were wrongly rotting in jail. Breaches of justice like this are impossible to redress and should never have happened in the first place. Although there is an obligation on the Prosecution Service to reopen cases like these, they only seem to do it when the public is watching. It appears that the pride of a few privileged individuals was more important than delivering justice. I forgot to mention that these men were in an ethnic minority generally with the lowest incomes in NZ and not well supported by the white majority.

NZ MMP (Multi Party Proportional Representation) election to Parliament has a 5% threshold for small parties. This figure was debated when the Act was first passed in Parliament. It stayed at 5% on the basis that this figure would be reconsidered after NZ had several years experience with MMP elections. This review has not occurred yet in about 20 years experience with MMP.

This has the effect that minorities below 5% find it quite difficult to gain any representation in Parliament.

People with mental health problems amount to about 25% of the population, well above the 5% MMP threshold. But their interests are poorly represented in Parliament. This shows up in funds allocated by Parliament for mental health care have frequently been diverted by DHBs into other areas of medicine. For example, overheads have been

charged solely to mental health budgets and the result is that a large part of the mental health budget effectively delivered value to obstetrics and gynaecology and the like. ????

As well as these procedural problems, their needs are poorly listened to by the public and by MPs. Their requests for help are not listened to, because they are easily dismissed as “other”, as inferior members of society. As a result, our needs are poorly provided for and children are poorly protected from abuse and maimed child development due to poor quality parenting and the impacts of poverty onto parents.

When marginalised people are left with no power, they cannot force people to listen. In our society, people with mental health problems are barely listened to. They have no power or agency at all.

One homeless man had observed that during the several years that he and other homeless men had been waiting for emergency accommodation, WINZ had arranged emergency accommodation for several women. On despairing of ever being heard at all, he took a shotgun and killed two WINZ workers. WINZ did listen and put security guards on the doors of WINZ offices, up and down NZ. (It is horrifying to note that WINZ paid the security staff less than the minimum wage, in breach of NZ legislation to protect workers from exploitation by powerful employers. It took two years for this breach to be rectified. This behaviour by WINZ is another example of Ruler’s Prerogative coming before individual human rights protections.)

Most homeless people have serious mental health problems and have never been able to access Government medical mental health treatment. Their original mental health problems generally resulted from childhood abuse and neglect – where the Government and society failed totally to provide effective care and protection when they were vulnerable children. There, but for the Grace of God, go I. It is so easy to blame the victim, but at the material time they were babies, toddlers and small children. We must shoulder our own guilt and act positively to give care and protection.

WINZ never did arrange accommodation for that homeless man, he ended up in jail with a life sentence.

The whole episode shows the extreme reluctance of privileged people to listen to others less fortunate than themselves. That homeless man eventually obtained improvements for other people, but not for himself. It could be thought that he was being altruistic, beyond what others had given to him? It is a dire comment that two WINZ workers had to be killed, to obtain these improvements. It is a sad comment on our Government and courts.

The moral of the story is – don’t be powerless.

Another useful comparison, is the protection of a rape accused and the protection given to the rape victim?

Consider the plight not just of adult women, but also children victims. Consider the chances of a successful prosecution, is it worth proceeding through a prosecution? When all of these factors are considered it can be thought that accused rapists are better protected than rape victims. Is this because judges see women as “other”, thus refuse to understand the impact of rape onto women, or cannot understand these impacts, even if they tried.

Although it is never stated, it does appear that there is a hierarchy of human rights protection. When we look at the dates at which different aspects of human existence received human rights protection. Generally heterosexual men gained protections first. Slowly, over hundreds of years, protections were extended to women, the homosexual men, other racial groups. Looking at these dates shows how strongly privileged groups have fought, to refuse human rights protections to people other than themselves.

Going back to the Russian soldiers captured as prisoners of war in Ukraine. They were compulsorily conscripted. They were at the very bottom of the hierarchy of human rights protection. If sent back to Russia, they could possibly be more vulnerable than being a prisoner of war in Ukraine. Some had applied for asylum on that basis.

By contrast, president trump of USA was known to be a draft dodger, by travelling to Canada through the time that he was subject to draft. He didn't see any need to comply and wasn't embarrassed about his behaviours.

A lawyer entering Mt Eden prison to see a client, was strip searched without a court warrant. He sued the prison authorities and was quickly awarded \$10,000 compensation.

By comparison, when Maori were held at gunpoint by police, during the Wairarapa Police Raids , this was found to be illegal. The police had hidden their identity badges and refused to identify themselves. But no compensation was awarded to the many Maori who were affected and affected for longer periods of time and affected in a much more life threatening way. White Privilege with icing on top, alas. Legal Fragility – the judges just did not take Maori grievances seriously, compared to their own egos.

When a western European man saw Russian men getting drunk and leaving most of the work to the women, he was told by one of the women “We know that if there is another war, they will be quickly conscripted and sent away. I know how much hope they have. They will be casually sent to their deaths by our government. I want my son to enjoy every moment he has on this Earth, in any way he wants to enjoy it. “ The Western European man was stunned and silent.

For all the talk of Male Privilege, not many women would be willing to swap places for a few moments, let alone to be permanently in that situation. In all humility, we do need to face all of these facets of our lives and make the best decisions that we can, in this changing world. We have to face those situations in which we take advantage of other people, even where we try to think it isn't important (to us).

Privilege in NZ Today

A privileged person can easily refuse to listen to a marginalised, disempowered, vulnerable person. On the contrary, it takes willingness and effort to actually listen. And for what gain – none at all? ? ? ?

What credibility do they have?

What could I learn from them, when they are a failure in every sense?

If I have a warm house, what can I learn from a person who is forced to sleep under motorway bridges, in cemeteries, in shop doorways, when it is raining, cold and windy?

That is exactly how they have built up their influence, their power, their privilege - by NOT listening to “those” who are weak or vulnerable.

Blaming victims works very well, in the short term, in our world. Blaming people who failed to protect themselves when they were babies, or toddlers or small children..... or were forced to face gunmen with no arms.....

But this is not the face of altruism and open hearted human rights protection. Can we remember - there but for the Grace of God, go I.

A wise person can learn from a fool, but a fool can't learn from a wise person.

A fool can refuse to listen, because in their cultural superiority they are not aware that the barrier to listening lies in their own head. Perhaps, behind their own eyes?

Frank Lowie, the businessman who built up the Westfield Shopping Centres, said that he found that it was so much easier to make deals with fellow Jews. In essence, people who were culturally very similar to him. He approached every business deal as if it might be his last.

It was only in his seventies that he discovered he did not have to do business like that. He grew up as a young teenager, in the Warsaw ghetto, under ever present threat of being arbitrarily killed for no reason.

Please think through your own culture and choose how you wish to live your life. Exercise your own agency, don't be controlled by the facts of your history.

I will be prejudiced just this once (once doesn't really matter)

When I choose to give a rental tenancy to a sensible person, who has a job and stable life, over a person with mental health problems, I am just being prejudiced this once.

Well actually, there were lots of "just one time". But it doesn't add up to anything, in my life.

But that person has just experienced prejudice in obtaining accommodation, in obtaining a job, in getting a bank loan. It wasn't just once, but at every step of the way. From less money in their pocket, they have to apply for more house tenancies, to apply for more jobs, to be treated as "other" at the local church.

What didn't add up to anything, in the eyes of the privileged person, added up every step of the way for the marginalised person. It didn't just add up in the dis-affirmation of feelings, the little bit of money in their pocket disappeared extra quickly for transport and other costs to make applications.

If we care to see, the costs of prejudice add painfully and it should be easy to see why suicide becomes attractive and protective. This is what our "survival of the fittest" society is all about. We can pray wearing a suit, forgetting that - there but There for the Grace of God go I.

If you choose to listen - you can exercise your agency to make a better world for everyone. Who knows, one day it might be you, that is not being listened to and who is sliding down toward oblivion. For whom death is now attractive.

Dehumanising the “other” is sliding gently and without brakes towards genocide, if our lives become more difficult for some reason.

We must willingly accept that the same standards of behaviour should apply to ourself, as to others.

Even more important than applying this to individuals, we must apply the same standards to all country's actions. Given the issues of many cultures, it is very difficult to do this. Peace can only be safe, when we are doing this. An essential feature is respect for human rights, over countries freedom to break rules because they feel fear.

Ruler's Prerogative doesn't have to be visible in legislation to happen. It is the actual behaviours that matter, in courts and Parliaments. If it is present in judge's behaviour, then it is a social problem. If it is in Government's behaviour, then it is a problem.

Although how marginalised people are treated and Ruler's Prerogative are at the opposite ends of the privilege spectrum, comparing them gives a clear measure of the altruism of a society.

White Fragility in NZ Today

It is difficult to accept that my success is partly my own work and partly due to privileges of who my parents were. Of course I chose my parents well. That perhaps I have treated others with cruelty and insensitivity, that I was to some degree - the Bad Guy. Even if it was completely “legal” at the time. I didn't feel the “others” pain. I left them to it. I turned a deaf ear and a blind eye.

Jeremiah 5:21 Hear now this, O foolish people, and without understanding; which have eyes, and see not; which have ears, and hear not.

There are none so blind, as will not see.

I am a white person in NZ. Whether I like it or not, I have benefitted from the unethical behaviour of my ancestors. Behaviour that today would surely be rewarded with long jail sentences. So how can I say forget that, it is in the past and sit quietly on the benefits. Then and now, the law is quite clear, a thief cannot gain ownership of what they stole. To steal land from under their feet.

At that time, theft was a crime. Murder to commit theft was at the very high end of murder as a crime. It is no different today. There are no extenuating circumstances, on the contrary. Settler colonialism crimes were and still are crimes. To see Maori as subhuman was only a convenient delusion, by people with murder in their hearts and theft in their mind. To further murder to cover their tracks makes it only worse....

So why should I hope to be let off lightly in this clear situation?

If I wish to face the visceral reality of what my ancestors did, in fairly recent history, surely I have to face the unethical reality of these actions and seek reconciliation from the victims. It is not enough for me to blame the victims, for being victims. As yet, we haven't satisfactorily reconciled for these heinous crimes.

White privilege is one issue.

Another issue is White Fragility - the unwillingness to face and address the crimes of white privilege in NZ.

The refusal to acknowledge it and then to act to seek reconciliation from the victims of these widespread crimes.

When You Feel the Other is Not Listening, Not Understanding

In this heading, it was somewhat ambiguous as to whether the word “other” had the meaning of the person you are talking to, or “other” in the sense of very different culture from myself, probably inferior and possibly not really human at all?

As well as me considering the person I am with as “other”, they may be considering me as “other”?

That is the question we need to ask ourself, when our self-advocacy just doesn't seem to be getting anywhere. Maybe the person we are with is looking on me as “other”, in the sense of very different culture from themselves and possibly I am not really human? (I know I am human, but they may not know I am human???)

When we can sense that we are making no progress at all, it almost certainly is not worth proceeding. We are more likely to do further harm to the relationship and there is little prospect of being able to make an improvement. Withdraw to a safe distance.

Maybe we can recover our humanity by using small talk to link us back into their human world, but this might only be a slim hope. If that doesn't work, then you need to call in the cavalry (if you have access to them).

Our remaining options are to find an advocate to speak for us, who is not seen as “other”, or an ally for the same reason. Community Organising Te Ohu provides a framework for linking together many marginalised groups. When one is dehumanised to “other”, likely some other marginalised people are still respected as human. They can be effective as advocates or allies. When we are marginalised, it is valuable to find what allies that we can and make good use of them.

This powerlessness reflect that MMP voting system in NZ only gives Party Seats to parties with at least 5% of the total vote. At the time that MMP was introduced this figure was strenuously argued and the larger parties refused to support any figure less than 5%. It was stated that this figure could be reviewed when there was experience with MMP voting. But this hasn't happened yet.

This process of feeling the other person as subhuman “other” isn't just an issue between able people to disabled people, it applies maybe even more between groups of disabled people. This is a serious barrier to us working together, to submit joint proposals to Government. We have to put in the effort to understand each other and our respective situations, so that we can advocate more effectively to Government.

Outsider / “Other”

It is natural for us to find relationships easier within our own culture. Though this is forgetting that even within our own culture, there are still lots of differences, just that we are more familiar with them.

That is where host skills show their value. Can we welcome someone that we are much less familiar with and allow them to feel comfortable, safe even, within our spaces?

Frank Lowie said he found it so much easier to do business with fellow Jews.

In times of greater survival pressure, suspicion of outsiders served an important evolutionary advantage. But it was also important to not inbreed and that was also important in an evolutionary sense, to survive. Delicate compromise. Today those issues remain, but we have more freedom to choose how we want to behave.

Living with such great suspicion of people that we are unfamiliar with is cruel and destructive to marginalised groups of people.

The word "other" has many meanings. It is easy to slip, without noticing, from one meaning to another, from an innocent meaning to totally dehumanised meaning.

If we notice ourselves losing empathy or sympathy to someone who is different in some way..... sniff, sniff sneeze do I feel a Genocide coming on?

Genocides explode like a viral infection, when there is uncombusted fuel of unreconciled hatred lying around. Intergenerational trauma must be addressed constructively.

Stop – is this where I want to go?

Remember those young Serbian men who were swept along in the hatred and did rapes and murders in cold blood.

Lets not pass on such unreconciled hatreds to our children.

I have pulled out another – swap seats. I need help...

There, but for the Grace of God, go I.

Genocide in Recent History

<https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Genocide>

Analysis of genocide before World War I is the result of modern studies applying objectivity and fact.

While the concept of genocide was formulated by Raphael Lemkin in the mid-20th century, the expansion of various European colonial powers such as the British and Spanish empires, and the subsequent establishment of colonies on indigenous territory frequently involved acts of genocidal violence against indigenous groups in the Americas, Australia, Africa, and Asia.[9] According to Lemkin, colonization was in itself "intrinsically genocidal", and he saw this genocide as a two-stage process, the first being the destruction of the indigenous population's way of life. In the

second stage, the newcomers impose their way of life on the indigenous group.[10][11] According to David Maybury-Lewis, imperial and colonial forms of genocide are enacted in two main ways, either through the deliberate clearing of territories of their original inhabitants in order to make them exploitable for purposes of resource extraction or colonial settlements, or through enlisting indigenous peoples as forced laborers in colonial or imperialist projects of resource extraction

In 1915, one year after the beginning of World War I, the concept of crimes against humanity was introduced into international relations for the first time when the Allies of World War I sent a letter to the government of the Ottoman Empire, a member of the Central Powers, protesting massacres that were taking place within the empire, among them the Armenian genocide, the Assyrian genocide, the Greek genocide, and the Great Famine of Mount Lebanon.[14] The Holocaust, the Nazi genocide of 6 million European Jews during World War II, is the most studied[15] and a prototype of genocide.

During the Cold War era, mass atrocities were committed by both anti-communist/capitalist[22][23] and Communist regimes,[24] among them the 1965–66 Indonesian mass killings and the Cambodian genocide.[25] The Rwandan genocide gave an extra impetus to genocide studies in the 1990s.

Bosnia and Herzegovina

In July 1995, Serbian forces killed more than 8,000[28][29][30] Bosniaks (Bosnian Muslims), mainly men and boys, both in and around the town of Srebrenica during the Bosnian War.[31][32] The killing was perpetrated by units of the Army of Republika Srpska (VRS) which were under the command of General Ratko Mladić.

In 2010, Vujadin Popović, Lieutenant Colonel and the Chief of Security of the Drina Corps of the Bosnian Serb Army, and Ljubiša Beara, Colonel and Chief of Security of the same army, were convicted of genocide, extermination, murder and persecution by the ICTY for their role in the Srebrenica massacre and were each sentenced to life in prison.[45][46][47][48] In 2016 and 2017, Radovan Karadžić[49] and Ratko Mladić were sentenced for genocide

Rwanda

the genocide that occurred there during April and May 1994, commencing on 6 April. at least 800,000 people were killed

Cambodia

The Khmer Rouge, led by Pol Pot, Ta Mok, and other leaders, organized the mass killing of ideologically suspect groups, ethnic minorities such as ethnic Vietnamese, Chinese (or Sino-Khmers), Chams, and Thais, former civil servants, former government soldiers, Buddhist monks, secular intellectuals and professionals, and former city dwellers. Khmer Rouge cadres defeated in factional struggles were also liquidated in purges. Man-made famine and slave labor resulted in many hundreds of thousands of deaths.[57] Craig Etcheson suggested that the death toll was between 2 and 2.5 million, with a "most likely" figure of 2.2 million. After five years of researching 20,000 grave sites, he concluded that "these mass graves contain the remains of 1,386,734 victims of execution." [58] Some scholars argued that the Khmer Rouge were not racist and had no intention of exterminating ethnic minorities or the Cambodian people; in this view, their brutality was the product of an extreme version of communist ideology.

Darfur, Sudan

In 2013 the United Nations (UN) estimated that up to 300,000 people had been killed during the genocide. Over 3 million lives are heavily impacted by the conflict.

Ten stages of Genocide

https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Ten_stages_of_genocide

#	Stage	Characteristics	Preventive measures
1	Classification	People are divided into "them and us".	"The main preventive measure at this early stage is to develop universalistic institutions that transcend... divisions."
2	Symbolization	"When combined with hatred, symbols may be forced upon unwilling members of pariah groups..."	"To combat symbolization, hate symbols can be legally forbidden as can hate speech ."
3	Discrimination	"Law or cultural power excludes groups from full civil rights: segregation or apartheid laws, denial of voting rights".	"Pass and enforce laws prohibiting discrimination. Full citizenship and voting rights for all groups."
4	Dehumanization	"One group denies the humanity of the other group. Members of it are equated with animals, vermin, insects, or diseases."	"Local and international leaders should condemn the use of hate speech and make it culturally unacceptable. Leaders who incite genocide should be banned from international travel and have their foreign finances frozen."
5	Organization	"Genocide is always organized... Special army units or militias are often trained and armed..."	"The U.N. should impose arms embargoes on governments and citizens of countries involved in genocidal massacres , and create commissions to investigate violations."
6	Polarization	"Hate groups broadcast polarizing propaganda..."	"Prevention may mean security protection for moderate leaders or assistance to human rights groups... Coups d'état by extremists should be opposed by international sanctions."
7	Preparation	"Mass killing is planned. Victims are identified and separated because of their ethnic or religious identity..."	"At this stage, a Genocide Emergency must be declared. Full diplomatic pressure by regional organizations must be invoked, including preparation to intervene to prevent genocide."
8	Persecution	"Expropriation, forced displacement, ghettos, concentration camps".	"Direct assistance to victim groups, targeted sanctions against persecutors, mobilization of humanitarian assistance or intervention, protection of refugees."

9	Extermination	"It is 'extermination' to the killers because they do not believe their victims to be fully human".	"At this stage, only rapid and overwhelming armed intervention can stop genocide. Real safe areas or refugee escape corridors should be established with heavily armed international protection."
10	Denial	"The perpetrators... deny that they committed any crimes..."	"The response to denial is punishment by an international tribunal or national courts."

Analysis

Other genocide scholars have focused on the cultural and political conditions that lead to genocide. Sociologist [Helen Fein](#) showed that pre-existing [antisemitism](#) was correlated with the percentage of Jews killed in European countries during the Holocaust.^[3] Political scientists such as Dr. Barbara Harff have identified political characteristics of states that statistically correlate with risk of genocide: prior genocides with impunity, political upheaval, ethnic minority rule, exclusionary ideology, [autocracy](#), closed borders, and massive violations of human rights.^[4]

Stanton's model places the risk factors in Harff's analysis into a processual structure. For instance:

- Political instability is characteristic of what Leo Kuper^[5] called "divided societies" with deep rifts, as in *classification*.
- Naming and identifying members of the group occurs through *symbolization*.
- Groups targeted by the state are victims of *discrimination*.
- An exclusionary ideology is central to *dehumanization*.
- Autocratic regimes foster the *organization* of hate groups.
- An ethnically polarized elite is characteristic of *polarization*.
- Lack of openness to trade and other influences from outside a state's borders is characteristic of *preparation*.
- Massive violations of human rights are examples of *persecution*.
- *Extermination* of the group in whole or in part legally constitutes Genocide.
- Impunity after previous genocides is evidence of *denial*.

Stanton has suggested that "ultimately, the best antidote to genocide is popular education and the development of social and cultural tolerance for diversity

The reasons given above show why human rights protections are critical, to prevent privileged groups using dehumanising tactics onto marginalised groups.

Bringing Up Our Children

In the privacy of our home, what we say to our children brings out the values of our society and the conflicted present in our society. We are bringing up our children to survive and we hope, thrive.

But the conflict of bringing up our children to be willing soldiers, goes quite against our desire for them to enjoy a good life. Do we gloss over these issues? Do we express our own discomfort?

Bringing up our boy children and girl children again brings out a different set of conflicts of interest.

Although The Code of Hammurabi said to expect justice, do we explain that justice is an ideal that some people are destined to see only the breach?

For us to act, we must face our discomfort.

Leave No-one Behind

To act on Leave No-one Behind, we need to listen openly and sensitively and make balanced, carefully weighed decisions. We need to be able to apply respectful, appropriate standards fairly.

It is only through careful listening and understanding, that he can handle multiple problems and intersections fairly.

It is only through respecting other cultures, that we can listen and understand.

Why We Can't Wait by Dr. Martin Luther King

Drifting delay is not delivering justice.....

NOTE: Although Dr. Martin Luther King wrote these words in 1964, in 2020 the goals set out here are still not effected in everyday life, more than half a century later.

It is the beginning of the year of our Lord 1963. I see a young Negro boy. He is sitting on a stoop in front of a vermin-infested apartment house in Harlem. The stench of garbage is in the halls. The drunks, the jobless, the junkies are shadow figures of his everyday world. The boy goes to a school attended mostly by Negro students with a scattering of Puerto Ricans. His father is one of the jobless. His mother is a sleep-in domestic, working for a family on Long Island.

I see a young Negro girl. She is sitting on the stoop of a rickety wooden one-family house in Birmingham. Some visitors would call it a shack. It needs paint badly and the patched-up roof appears in danger of caving in. Half a dozen small children, in various stages of undress, are scampering about the house. The girl is forced to play the role of their mother. She can no longer attend the all-Negro school in her neighborhood because her mother died only recently after a car accident. Neighbors told how, for two hundred years, without wages, black people, brought to this land in slave ships and in chains, had drained the swamps, built the homes, made cotton king and helped, on whiplashed backs, to lift this nation from colonial obscurity to commanding influence in domestic commerce and world trade.

Wherever there was hard work, dirty work, dangerous work—in the mines, on the docks, in the blistering foundries—Negroes had done more than their share.

The pale history books in Harlem and Birmingham told how the nation had fought a war over slavery. Abraham Lincoln had signed a document that would come to be known as the Emancipation Proclamation. The war had been won but not a just peace. Equality had never arrived. Equality was a hundred years late.

The boy and the girl knew more than history. They knew something about current events. They knew that African nations had burst the bonds of colonialism. They knew that a great-great-grandson of Crispus Attucks might be ruled out of some restricted, all-white restaurant in some restricted, all-white section of a southern town, his United States Marines uniform notwithstanding. They knew that Negroes living in the capital of their own nation were confined to ghettos and could not always get a job for which they were qualified. They knew that white supremacists had defied the Supreme Court and that southern governors had attempted to interpose themselves between the people and the highest law of the land. They knew that, for years, their own lawyers had won great victories in the courts which were not being translated into reality.

They were seeing on television, hearing from the radio, reading in the newspapers that this was the one-hundredth birthday of their freedom.

But freedom had a dull ring, a mocking emptiness when, in their time—in the short life span of this boy and girl—buses had stopped rolling in Montgomery; sit-inners were jailed and beaten; freedom riders were brutalized and mobbed; dogs' fangs were bared in Birmingham; and in Brooklyn, New York, there were certain kinds of construction jobs for whites only.

It was the summer of 1963. Was emancipation a fact? Was freedom a force?

The boy in Harlem stood up. The girl in Birmingham arose. Separated by stretching miles, both of them squared their shoulders and lifted their eyes toward heaven. Across the miles they joined hands, and took a firm, forward step. It was a step that rocked the richest, most powerful nation to its foundations.

This is the story of that boy and that girl. This is the story of *Why We Can't Wait*.

-MARTIN LUTHER KING, JR. *Atlanta, Georgia*

January 1964

Priority of Human Rights Protection in NZ - compare treatment of lawyers to Maori

This chapter uses concrete examples from NZ's recent history, to show the different priority given to protecting white men's human rights, than to protect the human rights of marginalised Maori.

The priority is different.

The weighing of damage or insult is mind bogglingly different.

See the earlier chapter in this booklet "Disabled people fare worse in their home, economic, and social lives". That chapter looks carefully at some quality of life issues for various disabled people, in quantitative detail. It only gives a very basic introduction and does not have sufficient detail to be able to fairly share out limited resources among disabled people.

Justice is often expressed by concrete images, images of grandiose buildings and images of weighing balances.

But the value lies in listening, understanding in relevant cultural perspective, understanding of vulnerability, weighing the issues and balanced judgement. Curiously, all of these are subtle and cannot be seen at all !!!

They can be felt.

They can drive people to suicide.

Sometimes people will murder to avoid justice.

Despite the subtlety, these issues hold huge power in our society and we must face them directly, so that other people are respected as much as we are.

We must understand the details, the big and the small, the bright and the dim. This requires quantitative analysis, not just qualitative analysis. Understanding of intersectionality requires exhaustive, careful quantitative analysis.

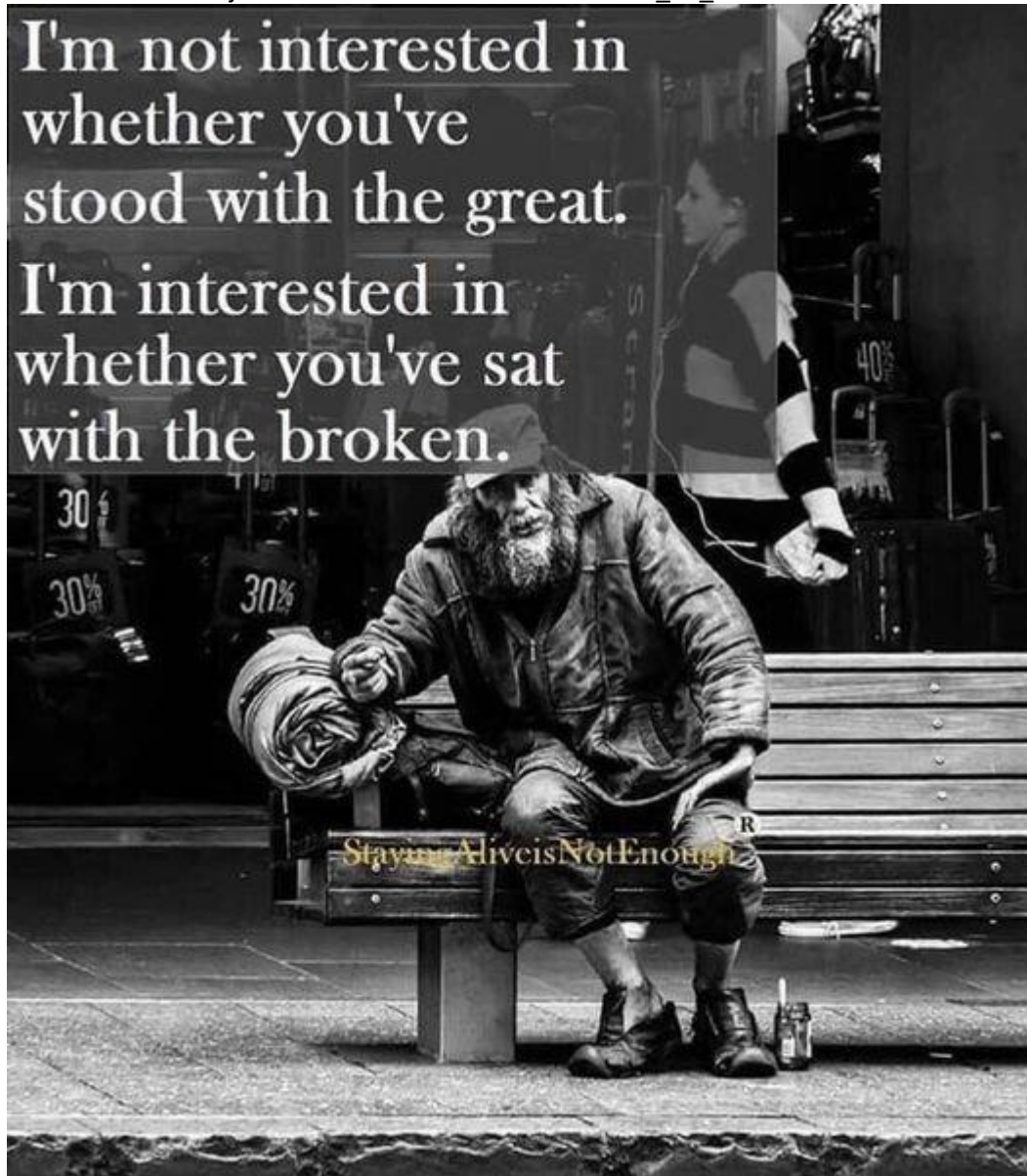
Qualitative is a good place to start, but it is only a stepping stone, to where we must go.





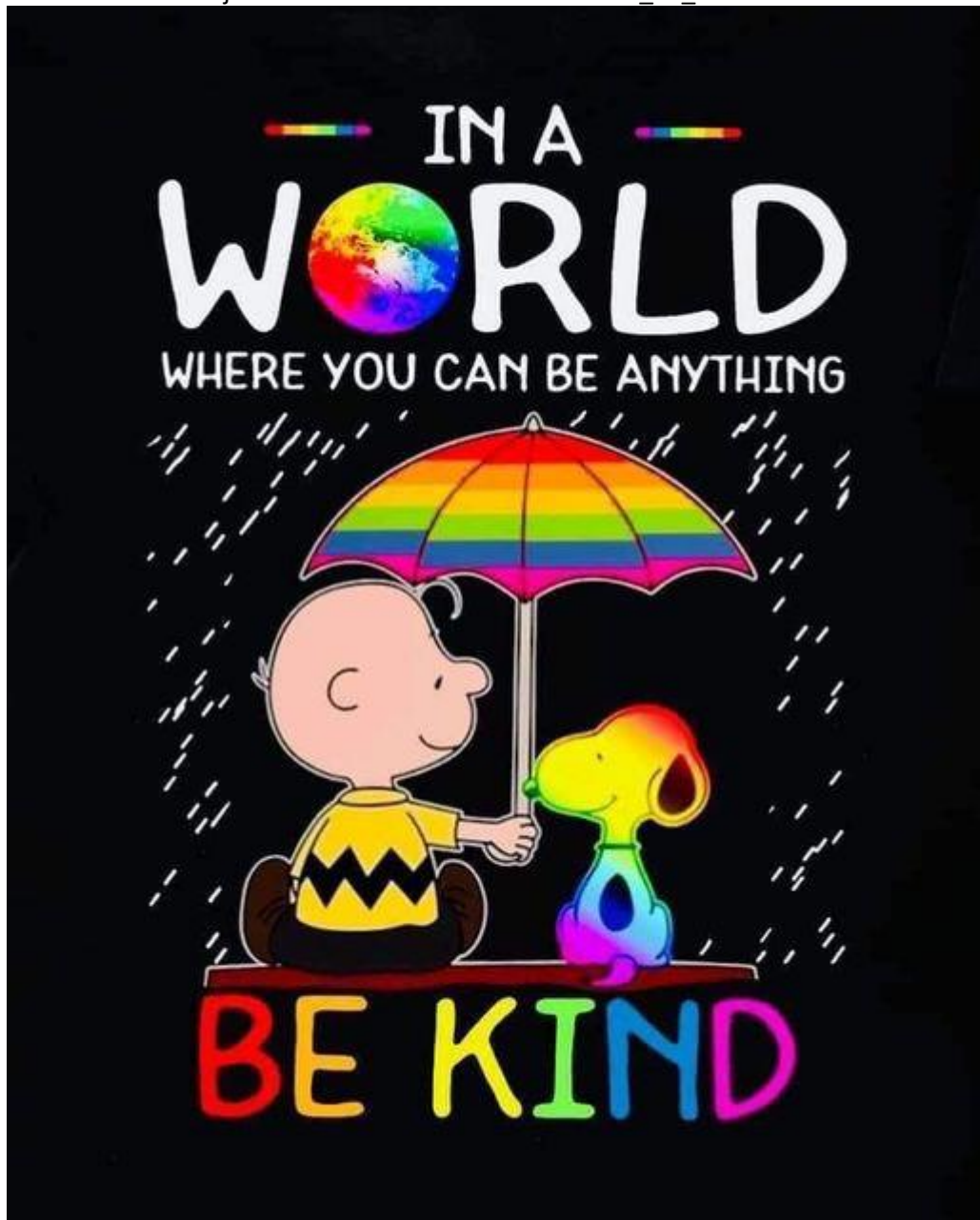


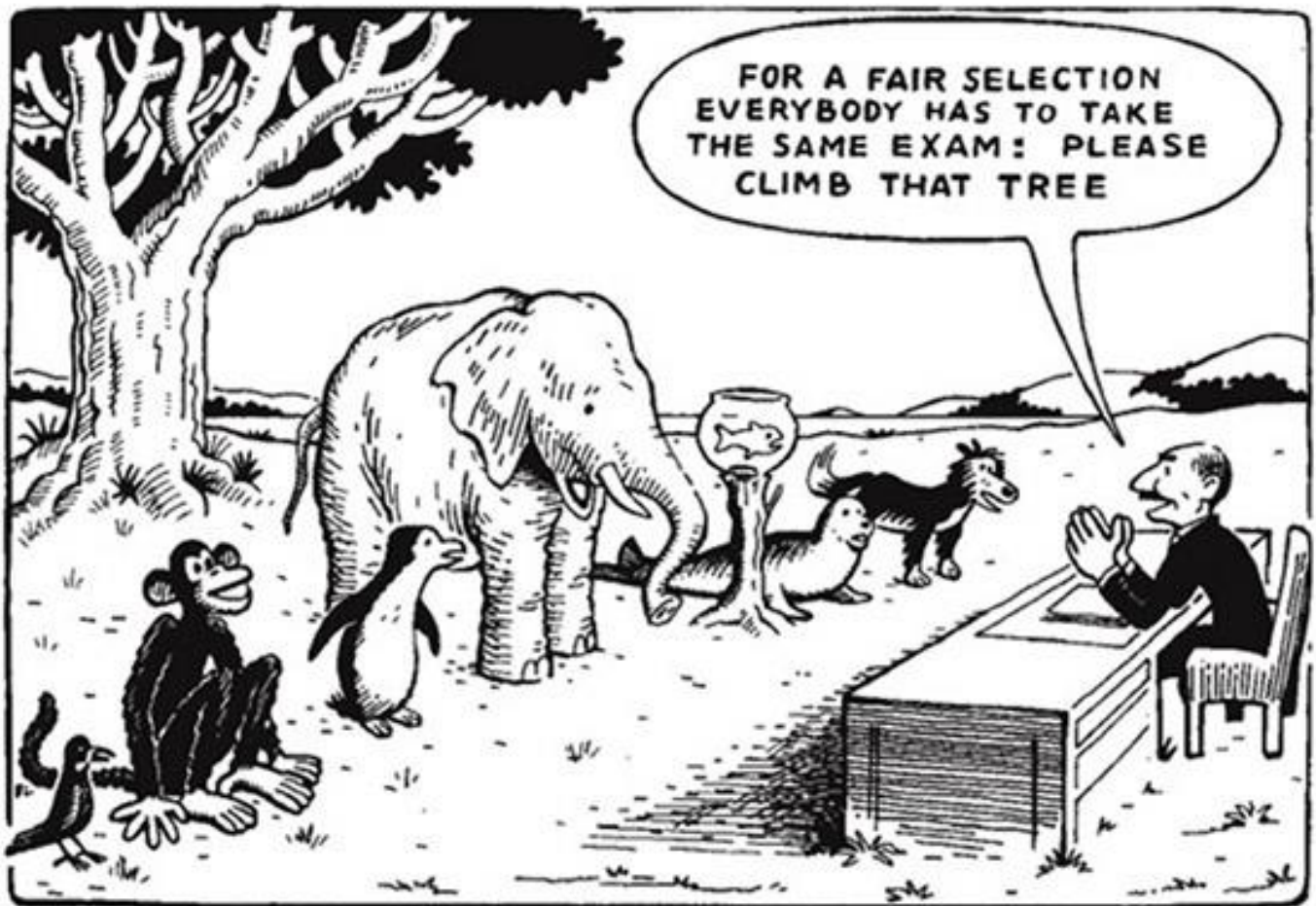
Diversity is having a seat at the table, inclusion is having a voice, and belonging is having that voice be heard.



I'm not interested in
whether you've
stood with the great.
I'm interested in
whether you've sat
with the broken.

Staying Alive is Not Enough





"IN ORDER TO EMPATHIZE WITH
SOMEONE'S EXPERIENCE YOU MUST
BE WILLING TO BELIEVE THEM AS
THEY SEE IT AND NOT HOW YOU
IMAGINE THEIR EXPERIENCE TO BE"

-BRENÉ BROWN



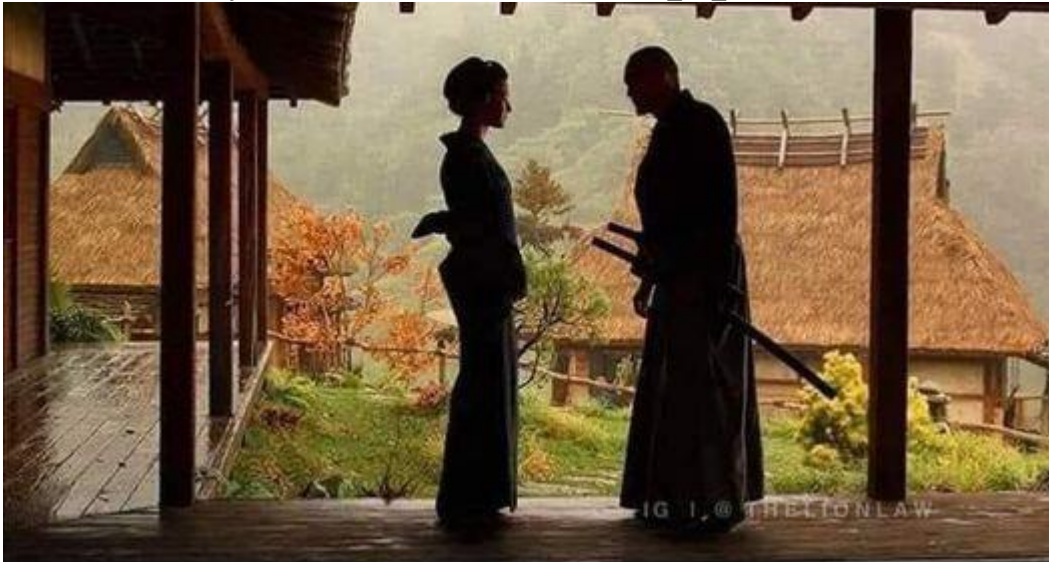






BE THE WOMAN THAT FIXES ANOTHER
WOMANS CROWN WITHOUT TELLING THE
WORLD IT WAS CROOKED 👑🌸👧👧





When someone tries to trigger you by insulting you or by doing or saying something that irritates you, take a deep breath and switch off your ego. Remember that if you are easily offended, you are easily manipulated.







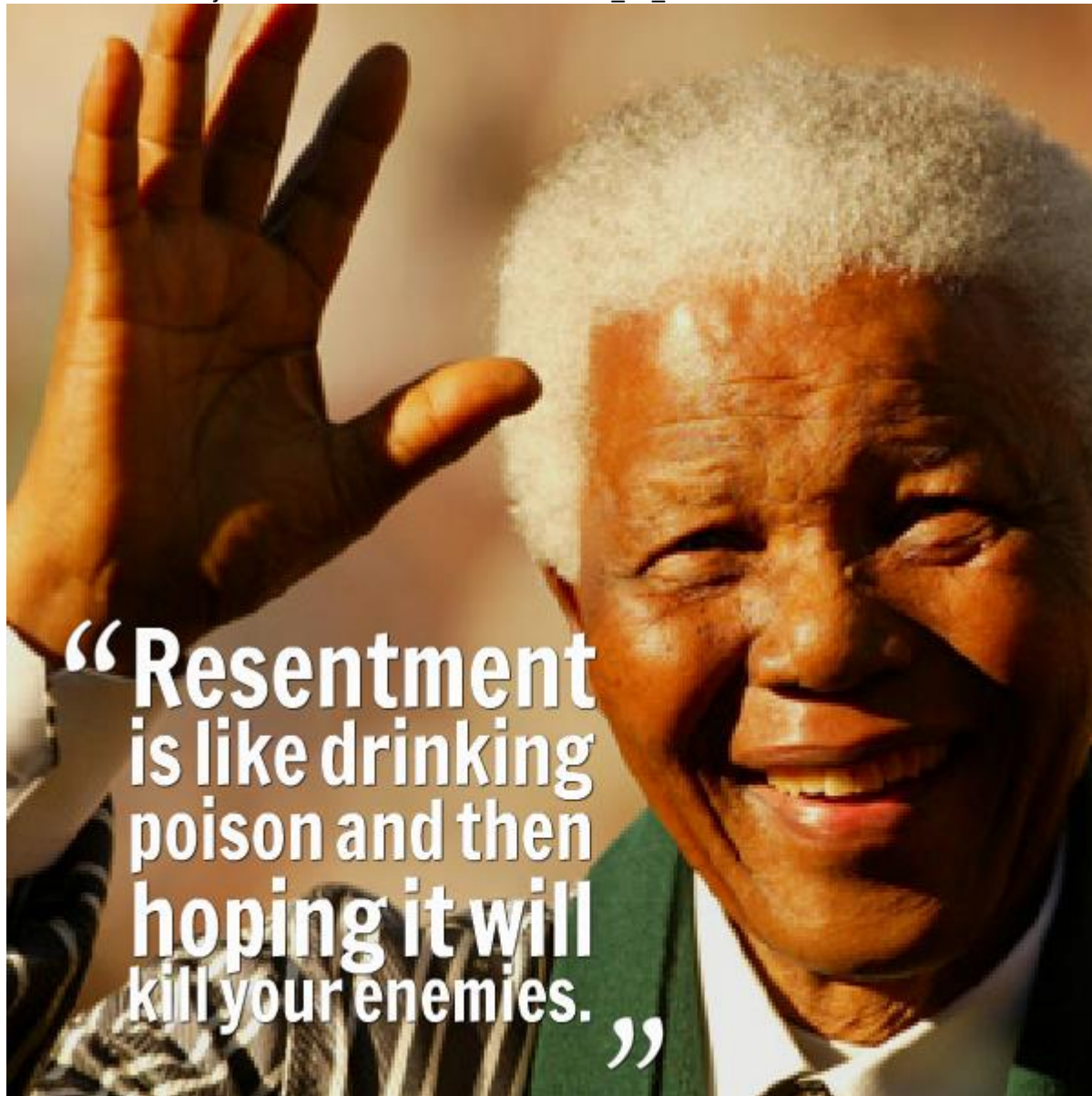








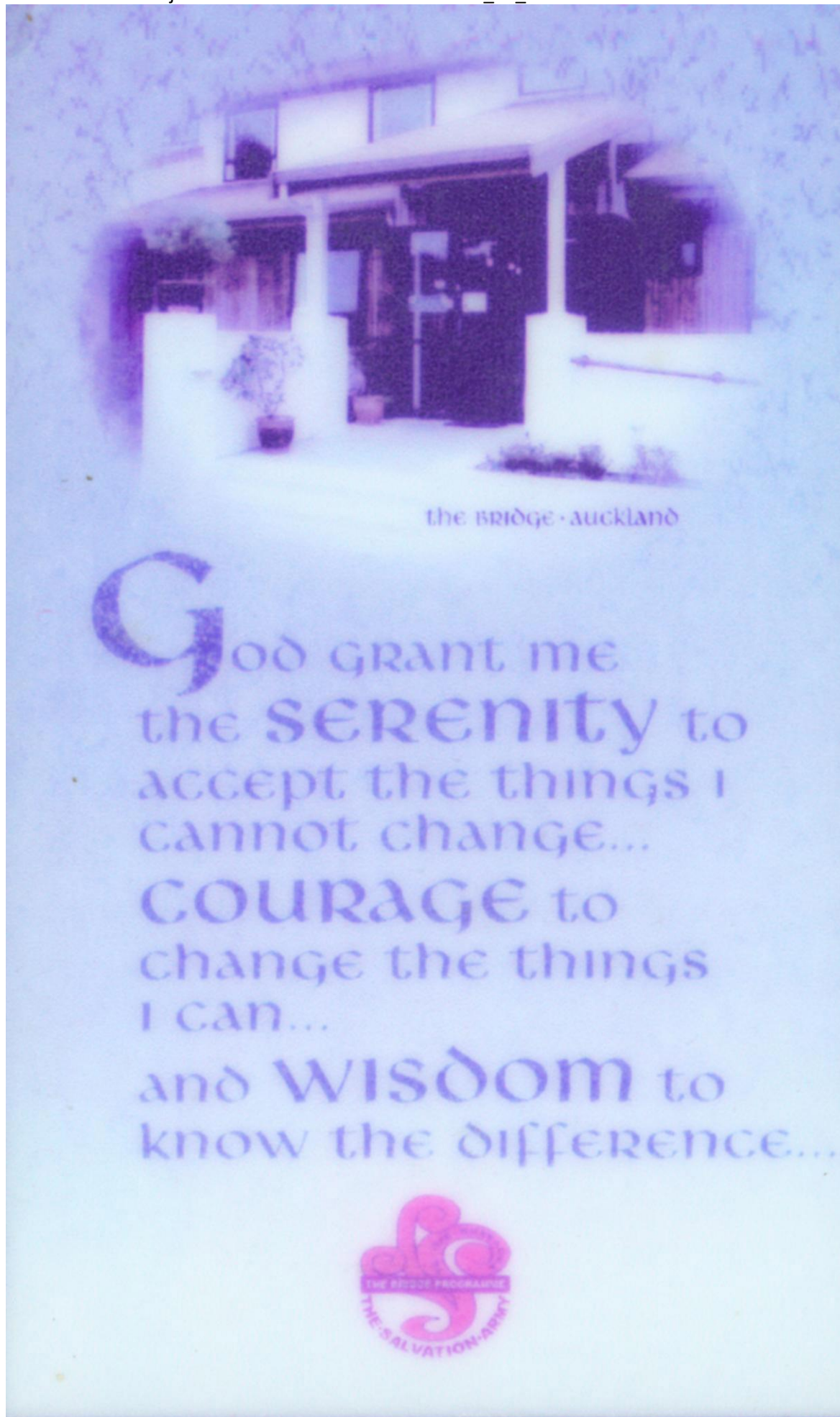


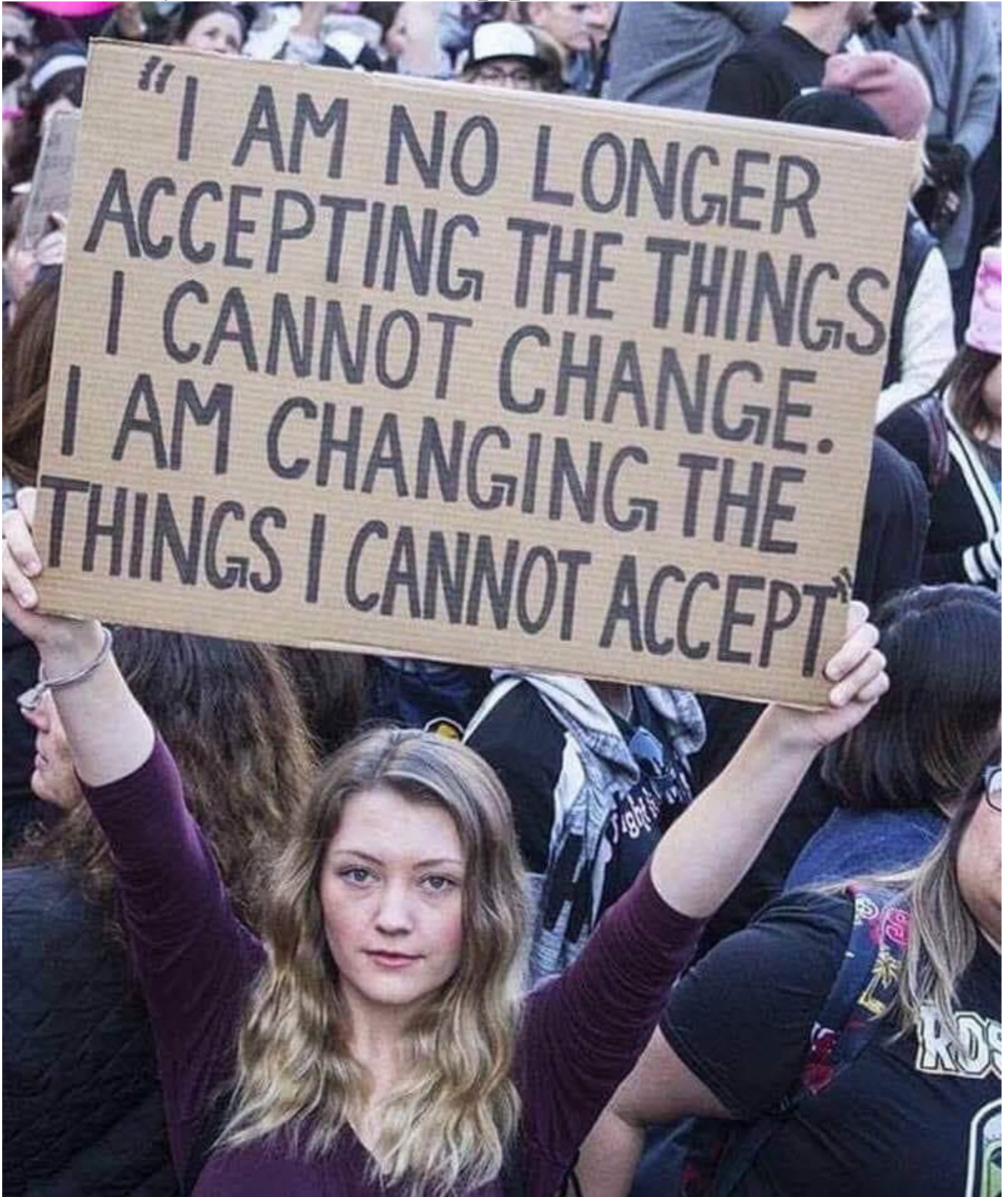


Sometimes I wonder what happened
to the people who asked me for
directions









Demeaning prison search sees lawyer issuing writ

30 Jun, 2000 03:24 PM

<https://www.nzherald.co.nz/nz/demeaning-prison-search-sees-lawyer-issuing-writ/HOJIDWUBSL34H2KVDU4J6V25JM/>

A North Shore lawyer is suing the police for \$40,000 for what he says was a demeaning search at Mt Eden Prison.

John Mather says he was appalled at the way visitors were subjected to a "pat-down" search and made to turn out their purses and pockets in full public view.

Being a lawyer did not save Mr Mather from the indignity of being searched, despite his protests.

He believed it was a joint police and Customs operation, possibly looking for prohibited objects being smuggled in.

He said that when he pulled into the car park at the prison, he was told his car would be searched. After getting out of the vehicle, he was directed to two female Customs officers who were searching people.

He gave them his card and said he was visiting a client.

If it was a precondition of entering the prison that he undergo a search, he told them he would not consent and would not enter the jail. Mr Mather said the Customs officials had no problem with that and he returned to his car, which had been searched.

But almost immediately two plain-clothed police officers stopped him.

"They kept telling me that I could do it one of two ways - the easy way or the hard way - which I took to mean that if I did not cooperate they would use some form of force and I was specifically threatened with arrest for obstructing them."

Mr Mather said the officers cited the Penal Institutions Act under which they were searching people.

Mr Mather said he was not given a scan search, which he thought a fairly unobtrusive method, but was subjected to the pat-down search. The act specifically decrees that pat-down searches were to be conducted with a degree of privacy and sensitivity.

He now says he has written to the police saying he intends issuing proceedings against them for illegal detention for having stopped him, forcing him out of his car and threatening him with arrest; assault, being the threat of force; breach of the Bill of Rights Act; and humiliation and hurt feelings.

Auckland police were not in a position to comment last night.

By TONY STICKLEY

<https://www.nzherald.co.nz/nz/apology-cash-for-lawyer/UG4EDQ7LIPLD4L66Z7WFNLYD3Q/>

Police have paid a North Shore lawyer \$10,000 in an out-of-court settlement for subjecting him to a "demeaning" search at Mt Eden Prison.

Barrister John Mather also received a face-to-face apology from the two officers involved and a promise that it would not happen again.

Mr Mather originally sued the police department for \$80,000 for false imprisonment, unreasonable search and common assault.

But he accepted a \$10,000 settlement before the case went to court.

Mr Mather said that when he went to visit a client he was appalled at the way visitors were subjected to a "pat-down" search and made to turn out purses and pockets in public view.

Mr Mather explained that he was a lawyer and produced his card.

He said he refused to undergo a search and returned to his car but almost immediately two plain-clothed police officers stopped him.

He said they told him he could do things the "easy way or the hard way".

"I took that to mean that if I did not co-operate they would use some form of force and I was specifically threatened with arrest for obstructing them."

Despite his protests, he was subjected to a search.

The police officers said they were searching him under the Penal Institutions Act, which Mr Mather said applied only to prison officers.



PHIL WALTER

Mt Eden Corrections Facility was ordered to pay the lawyer \$900 in damages. (FILE PHOTO)

An Auckland barrister has been awarded damages after being unlawfully "strip searched" at Mt Eden Corrections Facility.

Judge Philippa Cunningham ruled Auckland barrister Owen Edwin Harold was unlawfully and unreasonably searched when told to remove his braces and shoes.

He was awarded \$900 after a hearing in October, a court judgement said.

On March 7, 2017, Harold was visiting a client at MECF to ascertain a signature from the prisoner.

READ MORE:

- * [Australian man stripsearched 'without the slightest justification' gets \\$117k payout](#)
- * [Prisoner caught with candy tube of meth had history of smuggling](#)

items behind bars

* **Former prisoner wins case to have Arohata Prison strip search declared unlawful**

Harold was wearing braces as part of his clothing, something he had done for the last 5 to 6 years.

During the incident in March, he walked through the scanner at the entrance of the prison and he was required by a corrections officer to remove the braces and walk through the scanner again.

At a hearing in the Auckland District Court, Harold claimed he had been unlawfully strip-searched and corrections officers had acted unreasonably.

Harold had asked not to remove the braces, however the officer insisted with two other officers being present including one female, the court judgement said.



DAVID WHITE/STUFF

Owen Edwin Harold claimed he was unlawfully searched when visiting a client at Mt Eden Corrections Facility. (FILE PHOTO)

The lawyer, who has been visiting MECF for at least 20 years, had previously drawn attention to the officers of his braces.

This occasion was the only time he'd been asked to remove them, the judgment said.

Harold was required to remove his braces in a public area, unclipping them as he was able to and requiring assistance from another male officer to detach them at the back of his trousers.

This was all done in the presence of the female officer.

Afterwards he needed to go to a room to remove his shoes and trousers, so he could reattach his braces, redress and proceed to see his client.

Harold claimed this was an unlawful strip search when there were no reasonable grounds to insist on it and it was done in the view of a person of the opposite sex.

The lawyer also claimed it was a breach of the Corrections Act as it was not done with the greatest degree of privacy or dignity.

He further claimed it was a breach of the New Zealand Bill of Rights Act and sought damages of \$19,000.

"Mr Harold described being taken aback when asked to remove his braces. He said he felt that it was disrespectful and that there were much better ways of going about it," the judgement said.

A few months later, Harold was visiting a client in prison and this time was asked to remove his shoes.

He refused and asked to speak to a Principal Corrections Officer. Because he declined to remove his shoes he was unable to visit his client.

Corrections' defence was the requirement to remove braces and shoes for a scanner search does not meet the features of a strip search.

The officers present gave evidence that contraband items were located on visitors and some items are able to be masked by metallic items such as belts and braces.

If officers are unable to ask visitors to remove these items, more contraband could enter prisons.

Judge Cunningham found that a hand-held scanner and a visual inspection would have been sufficient and requiring Harold to remove his braces was unlawful.

She also found an officer requiring Harold to remove his shoes was also unlawful.

"This is an unsatisfactory state of affairs. One would expect the COs (corrections officers) manning the security checkpoint to know what the rules are and to be aware of their statutory obligations including s 94(2) to conduct any search with decency and sensitivity and in a way that affords the person the greatest degree of privacy and dignity," the judge said.

https://www.districtcourts.govt.nz/assets/secure/2020-03-09/fd795dda05/2019-NZDC-19154_Harold-v-The-Director-Mt-Eden-Corrections-Facility.pdf

New Zealand police arrest 17 in terror raids



Maori activist Tame Iti was arrested by police in raids today along with other campaigners.

Photographer: Dean Trembl/AFP/Getty

Mark Tran and agencies

Mon 15 Oct 2007 16.32 BST

<https://www.theguardian.com/world/2007/oct/15/terrorism>

Armed police in **New Zealand** today arrested 17 people in raids on military-style training camps and private homes after a year-long inquiry.

Three hundred police swooped on several locations on the North Island, including the isolated east coast.

"Based on the information and the activity known to have taken place, I decided it was prudent that action should be taken in the interests of public safety," the police commissioner, Howard Broad, said.

Mr Broad said police were aware that a number of people had been taking part in the training camps. Police had been searching for evidence of breaches of firearms laws and possibly a never-used anti-terrorism law.

He said the group's activities were domestically oriented. "I don't have evidence there is an international connection to this."

In the capital, Wellington, two men and two women were remanded in custody on weapons charges, including illegal possession of firearms and petrol bombs. Their names and other details were not released.

Supporters of the accused filled the public gallery. Some expressed shock and disbelief at who had been arrested, claiming the four were pacifists.

The New Zealand Herald newspaper said two hunters had stumbled across the camps and alerted police about armed men in camouflage.

The raids appear to have targeted Maori, political and environmental activists, all carried out under the Suppression of Terrorism Act and the Firearms Act.

The Herald said the police investigation focused on a core group of about 20 people but with 40 more potentially involved. Conversations had been taped, phones tapped, text messages intercepted and suspects videoed.

One of those arrested was the prominent Maori activist Tame Iti.

The prime minister, Helen Clark, said: "We were briefed last week that the police intended to undertake these arrests today."

Māori Terrorism in NZ?

<http://newzealandwars.co.nz/searching-vain-terror/>

On 15 October 2007, private homes throughout New Zealand were raided by squads of police, for the most part in full riot gear, carrying machine guns and handguns with knives strapped to their black garments. The raids occurred at dawn, under cover of darkness.

They smashed doors, windows and furniture, arresting people, confiscating computers, cameras, electronics, files, and papers, searching for incriminating material to support charges under the Terrorism Suppression Act 2002.

One of those arrested was Vietnam veteran Tuhoe Lambert, who lived in South Auckland with his family. At 6am, the police arrived, ordering the whole family into the street at gunpoint, including his 12 year old daughter, Patricia. The house was then ransacked.

Later that morning, the police occupied and locked down Ruātoki, a small Māori town on the western edge of the Urewera Valley.



The entire areas around Ruātoki and Taneātua were cut off. People were prevented from leaving their homes. Cars were stopped; occupants were ordered out at gunpoint. They were then searched and photographed. According to some witnesses, a school bus full of children was boarded by armed police.

Reporters from a local paper soon arrived – the pictures they took went around the world.

According to Tuhoe kaumātua Tamati Kruiger, a gross breach of civil rights occurred at Ruātoki that day – detaining people for hours without food or water, subjecting women to body searches, herding people into sheds while property searches were underway, and photographing onlookers near the roadblock entrance.



One young woman, Annie Rangihika, 17, was searched in full public view. When she was later approached by the *New Zealand Herald*, the Whakatane High School student declined to comment, saying only that she would never forget what happened.

At least 17 people around New Zealand were arrested. But, said Mr Kruiger, this did not include people taken from Ruatoki to Rotorua for questioning, before being released. Police at Te Ngae station had denied people legal representation, he claimed, and had moved them around police stations, thereby confusing concerned family and friends.

During a police press conference later that day, the police commissioner talked about the 'terror raids', thereby placing the language of the 'war on terror' into the public domain.

The raids had been necessary, he said, because certain individuals had been identified as posing a dangerous threat to the country's peace and security. Eight key activists had attended terrorist training camps in Te Urewera, he alleged, learning all about civil instruction, assassination and naplam bombing.

Their ring leader was Tuhoe rangatira, Tame Iti, who stood accused of arranging and conducting these terrorist training camps. Iti's house was raided, while he was asleep. At gunpoint, Iti, who is not a young man, was made to lie face down on the floor.

Those 17 arrested later appeared in court, charged with a range of alleged arms offences. Charges under the terrorism legislation would soon follow, it was said, once the police had amassed their evidence.



But the police case, and their evidence, never made it to court.

On 9 November 2007, Solicitor General, Dr David Collins, reported that, having reviewed all of the intercepted evidence obtained by the police, he could not permit the material to be entered into court. He therefore refused to allow charges to be laid under the Terrorism Suppression Act 2002.

This was because the 2002 Act was 'incoherent and unworkable', he said. The Act could not be applied to those arrested in Ruātoki and other undisclosed locations. The Act could only apply *after* alleged terrorism acts had occurred, not before.

The Solicitor General's ruling constituted a dramatic set back for the government, and the police. According to John Minto, the ruling proved that 'no domestic terrorist cells existed'. The ransacking and raids had reaped no rewards for police.

Instead, he said, the police and politicians had done a great disservice to the country, exacerbated by their continuing use of words like 'terror' to justify their activities, imbuing their raids with a false moral purpose. Whole communities had been traumatised and civil liberties threatened, he said.

Meantime, discontent amongst Māori had grown. On 12 November 2007, on the day that the last of the 17 arrested were finally released on bail, a hikoī left Taneātua, heading for Wellington. 1500 people eventually made it to Parliament, only to find the gates locked shut.



Labour Ministers Parekura Horomia and Nania Mahuta spoke to the protesters, but they were loudly challenged and derided, their pleas for Māori to 'wait and see' falling on deaf ears.

According to Nicky Hager, the raids had constituted a 'clossal over-reaction, a gigantic anti terror operation where there were no terrorists'. The government, armed with new legislation, resources and an emboldened police force, had instituted the raids of 15 October 2007, confident that terrorism and insurrection would be found and rooted out.

But, like Sir Galahd who had searched in vain for the Holy Grail, officers had stumbled about, hoping that one day, they would set eyes on the prize. But such a policy came only at the continuing expense of visiting trauma, misery, and despair upon ordinary New Zealanders.

A nation divided: Inside the Urewera Four trial

24 Mar, 2012 05:30 AM

<https://www.nzherald.co.nz/kahu/a-nation-divided-inside-the-urewera-four-trial/RGRON5C47E5INHYNOPBDRPCXQ4/>



Tame Iti, Urs Signer, Emily Felicity Bailey and Te Rangikaiwhiria were on trial in the High Court in Auckland. Picture / NZ Herald

NZ Herald

By: **Catherine Masters**

<https://www.nzherald.co.nz/kahu/a-nation-divided-inside-the-urewera-four-trial/RGRON5C47E5INHYNOPBDRPCXQ4/>

Tame Iti and his colleagues weren't the only ones on trial for the past five weeks. The terrorism claims in the still-unresolved Urewera case have revealed deep divisions over Maori and Pakeha world views and state surveillance in the name of public safety.

Mid-summer 2007 and a Pathfinder 4WD makes its way into the Urewera forest. Tuhoe activist Tame Iti is the driver. With him is a personal trainer and two teenage brothers, asked along to help demonstrate kick-boxing and general fitness to a group at a wananga organised by Iti.

Suddenly, they come across a roadblock among the trees. A group of masked men, some firing guns in the air, appears and orders them from the vehicle. Iti and the others lie on the ground and are frisked.

Afterwards they are allowed to get up and are taken to a makeshift camp where they meet other people. What follows is an apology for the ambush, the kickboxing demonstrations - and a heated discussion between a vegetarian and a meat-eater about their respective diets.

"It was just [the personal trainer] said in his talk that you need meat to build your body and that's where the lady, the vegetarian, said 'no, you can get it from seeds and stuff'," said one of the young men in court.

The incident was one of many dissected at the High Court trial of the "Urewera 4" - the last remaining defendants of 18 people originally charged after the so-called terror raids of October 2007. How it was interpreted exemplified two radically different world views pitted against each other in the courtroom.

See bottom of article for an interactive timeline of the Urewera trial.

The prosecution claimed what happened on that summer's day was evidence the men with guns were practising an ambush for as-yet unformulated future plans to commit serious violence on society.

The defence said it was simply an exercise in training for employment in the security industry, in the hope of getting people off the dole.

So what was really going on in the bush? Was it the teaching of bushcraft and security training, or was a sinister Plan B, to cause mayhem if Tuhoe's treaty claims did not go well?

The jury could not decide. Though they were clear in their verdicts this week about illegal use of firearms, they were unable to reach a verdict on the more serious charge: that the Urewera 4 were an organised criminal group, preparing to carry out serious violent offences including murder, arson and sabotage.

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The trial, which wound up last week after more than five weeks at Auckland's High Court, became part of an even bigger legal saga which has twisted and turned through the court system since the raids, raising questions about the law itself.

Two areas came under the spotlight: the anti-terror law passed in the fearful days following Osama Bin Laden's 9/11 strike on America, and police powers of search and surveillance - the extent to which the authorities are allowed to snoop on citizens in this new age of terror.

Pre-dawn raids

The raids of October 15, 2007 were the first time the public knew something was up. Before dawn, heavily armed police burst into homes of suspects around the country and descended in force on the little village of Ruatoki in the Bay of Plenty, an entranceway to the Urewera forest and home to Tuhoe.

The events became so notorious that two documentaries have screened on TV and in cinemas here and at film festivals in other countries.

On that morning in Ruatoki, children cried in fright and helicopters with snipers thumped overhead. Nationwide, doors were kicked in and seemingly unconnected people were ordered from their beds at gunpoint - a mix of Maori radicals, peace and environmental activists and other stirrers known to police.

The country awoke to the startling news we could have terrorists in our midst - and a network of them, not just one or two. As the day unfolded police told of clandestine guerilla-style training camps being run in the Urewera forest, of people running round with guns and explosives - there were even rumours of napalm bombs.

Police, it was revealed, had been covertly watching and listening not just in the Ureweras but in cafes in the towns. So alarmed were they about public safety they had carefully planned this series of raids, getting sign-off at the highest level before storming dozens of houses.

At the heart of the network of people allegedly preparing to unleash mayhem on society was Tame Iti. According to police Iti, who has bared his bottom at politicians and been the author of many episodes of memorable protest, was now heading a group with death and destruction in mind.

From day one the case was greeted with levels of disbelief - and it soon began to falter. Within the month police were told they could not lay their charges under the new Terrorism Suppression Act, not so much because of the evidence they had gathered but because of the "incoherent" and complex way in which the act had been written. This decision by Solicitor General David Collins would prevent the Crown using bugged conversations as evidence.

The trial

Late last year the police suffered a further blow. After years of legal wrangling a Supreme Court finding that evidence obtained by video surveillance was illegally gathered led to charges being dropped against 13 defendants who faced only firearms charges. Only four remained: Iti, Te Rangikaiwhiria Kemara, Urs Signer and Emily Bailey. They faced firearms charges and a joint

charge of being part of an organised criminal group with objectives including murder, arson and using guns against the police. A fifth accused, Tuhoe Lambert, was also to face the organised criminal group charge but died last July, aged 63.

In court, a jury finally got to see footage from police cameras hidden in the bush. There was a group taking part in military-style manoeuvres; a patrol in which some were armed and others carried sticks; an exercise to throw "Molotov cocktails" (Steinlager bottles filled with a petrol/diesel mix and wicks); an alleged practice ambush to kidnap someone from a vehicle. There were audio recordings of gunfire, including volleys from semi-automatics.

Various documents were admitted as evidence, including Tuhoe Lambert's diary, with training notes such as "take high ground then swoop down", "ambush", "speed and surprise", "deliver decisive blows first 24 hours" and "hit, rest, hit again".

The Crown produced a "scenarios" document written by Signer outlining four possible exercises: blowing up a cow shed; blowing up a bridge; setting fire to cars with Molotov cocktails and stopping a car to grab a backseat passenger. In one, a guard would have to be "eliminated".

The Crown also had transcripts of cellphone and computer chatroom conversations. In one, a person the Crown said was Iti talked of a Plan A and a Plan B if negotiations for Tuhoe self-determination hit the wall. Iti allegedly said: "We are planning for war if we have to ..."

In another, Iti allegedly said: We are a revolutionary military wing of Aotearoa."

In the raids, a pamphlet by Bailey was found which talked of "revolution" and, at the home of her brother Ira, was a chemical recipe which an expert witness said was capable of making a "thermite bomb".

And there were guns - a cache of rifles and shotguns some of which, the Crown alleged, were "military-style" semi-automatics.

But, the defence would argue, words can have more than one meaning and culture and events can't be understood by peering through a keyhole. And the weapons may not have been as sinister as the police believed.

Outside Courtroom 15 during a break one day late in the case sat a big Maori man dressed in black and with full facial moko, an alcohol and drug counsellor for Tuhoe Hauora which is Tuhoe's health service.

He was once Mongrel Mob, he revealed, and he still had shotgun pellets floating in his arm from the bad old days when he lived in the ganglands of Wairoa.

That was before he moved back to his Ruatoki homeland where he says his cousin Tame Iti, who is also a Tuhoe health worker, "pulled me from the hole". He was on the very first course Iti ran on living without violence, the man said.

On a day when Pakeha fearfulness - of Iti's moko among other things - was talked about in court, the big man pointed to a spiralling circle of black ink on his cheek.

"See how it goes around, always going round and round? That represents the planets. And these are connections," he said, pointing to the lines on his forehead.

"It's just continual. Atua, which is our gods, tangata which is us, and the connection from human to, I suppose, spiritual."

Nikapuru Takuta, 52, then nodded at the courtroom door and said "that's what that's about in there. Tame's been accused of something but all it is is connections."

Themes of connections and opposing world views threaded their way through the trial.

In court, where the lawyers outnumbered the defendants, Iti's defence counsel, former Labour MP Russell Fairbrother, stressed just how different Ruatoki was to the rest of New Zealand. There unlicensed guns, camouflage pants and balaclavas were the norm in a place where people hunted for food in the forest for reasons of both tikanga (culture) and poverty.

Crown prosecutor Ross Burns seemed to agree with the concept of two worlds. In his closing address he said it was usual in court hearings for the defence and prosecution to cover similar ground - that circles would intersect - but in this trial two very large circles barely touched.

Throughout, Burns tried to keep the focus on the evidence, stressing the unlawful use of firearms, the practising with Molotov cocktails, and quoting the intercepted cellphone and chatroom conversations.

The participants were planning acts of sabotage and armed combat - in other words "guerilla warfare".

This case was not about politics, he said, and the motivations of the accused were not relevant to the offending.

But the defence lawyers sought to broaden the case, placing the activities in the context of tikanga, political activism and Tuhoe's 160 years of grievance against the Crown.

Wherever they could, they exploited police ignorance about Tuhoe daily life and tikanga Maori, and portrayed Iti not as a villain, but a prophet ahead of his time.

His long history of protest to effect constitutional change had been flamboyant and theatrical but never violent, said Fairbrother.

In fact, Iti's activism had been the catalyst for an about-turn in the Crown's rigid stance on the past when, in 2005, it finally acknowledged the wrongs which had led to the confiscation of Tuhoe lands.

Why would Iti undo all this progress by "by some stupid act?", asked Fairbrother.

The defence raised other issues, suggesting that the Special Investigation Group formed after 9/11 had too little to do so turned its attention to protest groups. Christopher Stevenson, Signer's lawyer, noted "suspicion that's not reined in breeds more suspicion and applies its own proof".

The defence repeatedly pointed out that in the end, no terrorist attacks had actually happened. As Kemara's lawyer Jeremy Bioletti put it: "There's no thought crimes in New Zealand, not yet."

History

At times the courtroom became the setting for a history lesson. Tuhoe's grievances with the Crown were spelled out with the blessing of all, including the prosecution.

Such broad historical context was not usually relevant, Justice Rodney Hansen, said in his summing-up. But in this case a key question for the jury was whether the accused acted in a lawful purpose; and that could not be answered without an understanding of Tuhoe's historical aspirations and customs.

Defence witnesses spoke unchallenged on Tuhoe history and tikanga (culture and custom) and explained the language of indigenous activism. Waitangi Tribunal reports were admitted as evidence.

A defence expert witness, Dr Paul McHugh, said by video link from Cambridge University that Iti's activism was anchored in Tuhoe's history of fraught relations with the Crown.

"I think he's very media-savvy but I think that he is also deeply immersed in Maori custom and the importance of symbolism and of metaphor and those put together with media images can be very powerful. I think he also draws on another element, too, and the media magnify this and I think this is Pakeha fearfulness - and I think that his politics of protest ... use this and exploit this very carefully but also very adroitly."

Frequently, McHugh said, people regarded as rabble-rousers and tub-thumpers in their own time turned into tomorrow's heroes.

Another key witness for Iti was Tamati Kruger, Tuhoe's chief Treaty claims negotiator. Kruger gave much credit for recent remarkable progress in Tuhoe's relationship with the Crown to Iti and explained how the Crown had wrongly accused Tuhoe in 1865 of being complicit in the murder of two people. This led the Crown in 1866 to draw a line on a map and take all the fertile land on one side, which it gave to its soldiers, cutting Tuhoe off from the sea.

But, finally, in 2005 the Crown acknowledged the wrong and last year a historic "compact" (a formal agreement) was signed which recognised Mana Motuhake O Tuhoe - Tuhoe's right to determine its own future on issues including health, housing and education.

Kruger said Iti was the precursor to these advancements: "He has been instrumental in the expediency of these negotiations coming sooner rather than later."

In cross-examination, Burns asked Kruger whether training with Molotov cocktails at a camp would concern him. He replied it would and that it would be unacceptable to Tuhoe. Burns asked, too, if Kruger had seen the video footage and whether military patrols and violence were acceptable to Tuhoe. They were not, said Kruger.

The different worlds were also evident in police testimony about their investigation. Balaclavas and camouflage clothing were seen as suspicious. Participants had disguised themselves in the bush, the court was told.

But a defence witness said balaclavas were common in the area; that people wore them as beanies then rolled them down when the weather turned inclement.

Police who searched homes and offices on the day of the raids collected such items as an Oliver Stone documentary on Fidel Castro. They noted a political poster on an office wall and a T-shirt with a tino rangatiratanga emblem on it hanging on a washing line.

There was the police world and the real world, said Fairbrother.

The defence argued the "camps" were in fact wananga, a place to learn tikanga. One aim was to prepare Tuhoe youth for work in the security industry, including with a company logging on Tuhoe land. An intercepted communication on Iti's computer said there could be "mahe (work) in Africa for four of our guys".

Burns was having none of this. "To stop people nicking petrol in the bush, you don't provide balaclavered people with Molotov cocktails and semi-automatic rifles and pistols and so forth."

Words such as revolution and resistance used in documents and intercepted conversations spelled violence to police but the defence witness McHugh said these were words commonly used in independence struggles, even after the struggle was over. And Kruger said that for Tuhoe the word revolution meant "the battle for hearts and minds - the last battlefield".

Surveillance

How did the police know so much - or think they did - about the activities in the bush? The scope of the surveillance is an eye-opener for those who assume New Zealanders go about their daily activities free from the eyes of the state.

The police had been monitoring some of the accused for several years - in Iti's case, decades. Signer's activities - among them demonstrating against a weapons conference in Wellington and the American invasion of Iraq - had been noted since at least 2005. He was at the time a music student at Victoria University.

Police lead investigator Detective Sergeant Aaron Pascoe confirmed police shared information about protest groups relevant to the inquiry. Officers had attended demonstrations and Waitangi Day commemorations. "There was a lot of work done around the protest groups during the course of [the inquiry]. It was specifically for that reason." Pascoe denied, however, that the Special Investigation Group was specifically monitoring the four accused.

Undercover police not only hid in the bush during the "camps" but went far and wide tailing and photographing suspects. Kemara, described as the "armourer", was closely watched - there were visits to Parnell cafes, an army surplus store in Karangahape Rd, the Sportways gun shops in Mt Eden.

A camera installed opposite his Grey Lynn home snapped him loading his boot before the camps with what police took to be concealed rifles. Suspects in Hamilton, Palmerston North, Christchurch and Wellington were also watched.

The evidence

What did the cloak and dagger surveillance turn up? The footage from fixed cameras in the bush was given "never before seen" billing at the start of the prosecution case. The jury saw a group walking along a track, some carrying rifles, some sticks. Some wore balaclavas and camouflage clothing; others did not. The guy in front bent down - was he tying his shoelaces? Then he signalled to those behind to move ahead.

The Crown's military expert testified that some of the footage was consistent with military drills, while other footage wasn't.

Audio devices picked up the staccato rhythm of semi-automatic rifle fire but the video footage itself was silent. There were photographs of an upturned oven in a clearing, pock-marked with bullet holes. Strewn around the oven were toppled Steinlager bottles which the prosecution said had

been filled with petrol and diesel, set alight and thrown at the oven. Burns also pointed out small scorch marks on the grass.

The final video showed an exercise around a Pathfinder 4WD, in which a man got out of the wagon and placed a semi-automatic rifle on the bonnet and took aim. Others, some armed, were then seen running from the vehicle. The Crown maintained this exercise was an ambush to kidnap a backseat passenger and take him hostage.

The defence argued this was in fact an exercise in escorting a VIP. Iti's lawyer said it was consistent with the aim of preparing young Tuhoe for work in the security industry.

Rau Hunt, the ex-Navy drill instructor who conducted the exercise, testified for the defence that he had never been shown how to "snatch" a person so couldn't train people to do an ambush. Hunt added that the participants' skills were "so abysmal" that the prospect of their working in security was "a dream rather than reality".

The defence showed further footage of the same exercise, including Hunt demonstrating how to look under the vehicle "for contraband or a bomb".

Security training was even offered in explanation for the "Molotov cocktail" throwing. Fairbrother said the exercise was consistent with military training in how to deal with them.

The prosecution had more than video footage to build its case. There was the "Scenarios" document written by Signer - the key evidence against the Swiss clarinettist which fingerprint and handwriting experts said Signer had penned, outlining four potential training exercises. But three witnesses, including his former music lecturer, spoke of a man passionate about issues of social justice and world affairs, a man who was both tolerant and non-violent - "a peacemaker".

Burns asked each witness how they could reconcile the footage of Signer participating in armed military patrols with the person they knew. They could not explain this, they said, but each said the footage did not change their opinion of him.

At the Wellington home of Emily Bailey's brother Ira, they found in a notebook a chemical recipe for making a thermite bomb which Burns said was capable of "melting through an engine block of a car". This had "no place in bushcraft or survival skills in the forest", he said.

Ira Bailey was one of those charged who had firearms charges withdrawn last year. The defence argued that the recipe could have been sitting on his shelf for years and the Crown's expert witness conceded that "nowhere on this piece of paper discusses how it would be ignited". The defence also drew an admission from Pascoe that police had returned the recipe to Ira Bailey.

As for Signer, lawyer Christopher Stevenson said he was glad the scenario document was found "because it indicates that none of this was real". This was not a plan for guerilla warfare, it was a game, he said.

In Kemara's car was a copy of an online "zine" (magazine) *Today's Empire is Tomorrow's Dust*, edited by Emily Bailey. A prosecution witness read excerpts from a Bailey article *Strategising for a Revolution* in which she wrote she probably had only a further 25 years to live and wanted to participate in "a revolution of everything", invading Parliament and blowing up communication towers in the dead of night.

But her lawyer, Val Nisbet, asked the witness to read the full quote: "I want a revolution of behaviour, revolution of power structures, revolution of the global capitalist economy. I want

revolution of cities. I want revolution of everything. A world without oppression, a world of liberty for all, a world of communication and negotiation for resolutions that suit all and that work long term."

Other evidence against Bailey included a disassembled rifle found at the "bush hut" she was living in in Wellington. Her fingerprints were also on a gun cleaning kit at a Ruatoki house.

The raids turned up an array of guns and ammunition. Outside the house Iti was building at Ruatoki, wrapped in a sleeping bag under a tarpaulin, police found a Saiga .762 semi-automatic rifle, a 30-round magazine cartridge and two .22 rifles, a Ruger and a Magtech. Inside the house were more weaponry and ammunition, and face paint.

In the boot of Kemara's car were shotguns and ammunition. More rifles were in the caravan he was then staying in, at Tuhoe Lambert's Manurewa home.

Kemara's lawyers maintained the rifles were configured as sporting guns and he was entitled to them under his firearms licence.

For Iti, Fairbrother said tens of thousands of such rifles had been sold here. They were the most popular gun for "dispatching small animals" and for target practice.

The defence found backing in a prosecution witness, former gun dealer Wayne Dil, who said the Saiga was "more a fun gun - you go out with your friends, put some targets and have a bit of fun" but the prosecution argued that fitting a large capacity magazine to the rifles turned them into military-style weapons.

The weapons added to the material evidence, Burns explained in his closing, but there was also what the accused had to say - the intercepted chatroom and cellphone text conversations. Several suspects used the Aotearoa Cafe chatroom which computer-whiz Kemara had created.

One communication found on the work computer Iti used at the Ruatoki Mission House ticks off someone named "weka" for failing to turn up for a camp. "You need to be clear on these matters. We are a revolutionary military wing of Aotearoa."

The prosecution also placed much store on a conversation on the same computer with a Christchurch man which talked of an A Plan and a B Plan: "We are planning for war if we have to but training. ... We are not fighting for the return of the Ureweras but mana motuhake [self-determination]."

Fairbrother argued computers at the Mission House were shared and the message was not written by Iti. The conversation used Iti's name in the third person and the concluding words "my love" suggested the talk was between a man and a woman. "We don't know who it is."

On another seized hard drive was an exchange between Ira Bailey and Kemara discussing "fireworks", in which Bailey writes of his ears ringing after an explosion, even though he was 500m away. "I think it will easily kill someone if you chuck it in the window."

Kemara replies: "I will try to get more."

Prosecutor Burns often cited a text message exchange between Tuhoe Lambert and his nephew Kevin Lambert, in which the older man talks of Tuhoe freedom fighters needing "units in da cities".

Kevin Lambert: U mean like cells nd shit: nd then do da hit?

TL: Ae.

KL: Swt; i'm in.

TL: C if u got mates, got to love Tuhoe, give their lives.

KL: Got 2 mates; dum as fuk; do nethin 4 me; can drive truks; fly planes, got kidz 2.

TL: Cher cuz. Da dumber da better.

Another Tuhoe Lambert text mentioned needing "tough Tuhoe women to help kill the white eye".

The sources of some of these texts undermined their gravity, the defence suggested. Lambert was known as a big-noter and his grandiose statements were something of a joke to those who knew him, said Signer's lawyer Stevenson.

Burns said the intercepted communications helped put the guns and video footage and documents in context and gave insight into the motivations of the accused.

"One of the objectives, the Crown says, is murder. Intentional unlawful killing.

"The scenario document talks about sneaking down or around and then eliminating a guard. That can be killing or knocking unconscious. It suggests homicide or murder was one of the objectives."

He added in his closing: "You can't cross-examine a gun out of existence."

Reinforcing the notion of separate worlds were the gaps in both the prosecution and defence cases. The Crown failed to convince the jury that the accused were not only members of a group but an organised group that had an objective of carrying out murder or arson or other serious violent offences. But neither was the defence entirely convincing in explaining away some of the accused's behaviour, notably the training with Molotov cocktails.

It didn't need to, of course - the onus was on the Crown to prove its case beyond reasonable doubt. In the end the outcome - guilty findings on some of the firearms charges but an inability to reach a verdict on the organised criminal group charge - was not surprising.

The two worlds spilled from the dock and the witness stand into the public gallery.

Some Tuhoe came to court from Ruatoki and Taneatua as part of a roster and others were there nearly every day.

One was a woman with a moko on her chin who was loath to give her name but said she lived in the forest and who made a point of greeting Pascoe, the SIG officer in charge.

"Morena (morning) Aaron," she would sing out sweetly.

On the first day of the trial it was: "Have you raided anyone today?"

Not today, he said, and he would usually smile when she announced loudly when she saw him: "there's my darling Aaron".

Bubbling underneath this seemingly good-natured jibing was anger and hurt. Pascoe is blamed by many for treating the entire community of Ruatoki as criminals that morning of the raids. People on

their way to work were made to get out of their cars by armed men dressed in black "ninja" outfits and have their photos taken mugshot style.

Outside court the woman talked about human rights abuses by the police and how the men of Ruatoki had felt powerless to protect their wives and children.

"It was trespass, home invasion, assault with intent to injure..."

Nearing the end, Iti stood outside the Auckland High Court - described by a lawyer as "the ultimate theatre of protest"- signing autographs in the sun. For once, though, he hadn't choreographed the drama. The whole thing had been ridiculous, he said.

"Yeah, they really don't have any hardcore evidence ...

"I mean, the most scary part of it, I mean, they say it's a secret, this secret location but the only secret thing about all of this is them - cameras, secret operation."

They "bugged my bedroom, bugged my phone, bugged my kitchen, bugged my little red car". But Iti thinks he's been bugged for years.

The real target was Tuhoe, he said.

"Our culture and all of that is on trial."

The law

To a certain extent that scrutiny has rebounded on the police and the legal system which drew up the charges. In particular, the surveillance methods behind the raids have exposed some thorny legal issues.

While the police had obtained permission to intercept text messages and computer chatroom conversations, some of their surveillance on private property was illegal - and the police knew it. The Supreme Court judgment from late last year makes this clear. After the raids, the defendants challenged the use of the footage from hidden cameras placed in the bush on Tuhoe land and along the road leading into Ruatoki. Their challenge ended up before five judges in the highest court in the land.

Chief Justice Sian Elias was especially scathing of the police conduct. No law allowed the police to trespass on private land and undertake secret filming, she wrote, saying the police actions breached the Bill of Rights.

"The deliberate unlawfulness of the police conduct in the covert filming, maintained over many entries and over a period of some 10 months, is destructive of an effective and credible system of justice."

Though the charges against 13 defendants were dropped, the judges, by a 3-2 majority, allowed the covert footage to be used as evidence for the Urewera 4 on the basis of the seriousness of the allegations. A clause in the Evidence Act allowed this.

The decision, however, prompted the Government to controversially rush through an urgent "patch" to the law to allow the police to secretly film on private property, claiming the decision would jeopardise up to 40 pending trials and more than 50 active investigations.

Prime Minister John Key said without this change - which would not affect the Urewera trial - some very serious criminals would not be brought to justice. It was only a short-term measure, he said, until the Search and Surveillance Bill was passed because that bill had a provision dealing with the issue of secret filming on private properties.

Civil rights experts were enraged by the Government's move, as were many in the law fraternity. The Criminal Bar Association called the patch a quick-fix and Rodney Harrison, QC, who appeared in the Supreme Court as counsel for Iti and other Operation 8 accused, wrote in a Herald opinion piece: "A quick quiz: name one other so-called democracy that would respond to a botched police operation involving deliberate and prolonged police illegality by immediately passing validating legislation and retrospective effect? No? I thought not." The controversial Search and Surveillance Bill was passed by Parliament this week, expanding the range of visual surveillance powers.

The police might argue they were also hamstrung by Parliament - the investigation exposed serious failings in the hastily drafted Terrorism Suppression Act.

Three weeks after the raids, Solicitor General David Collins ruled out laying charges under the act saying though the investigation had uncovered some "very disturbing activities", the evidence fell short of meeting the very technical requirements of the act.

He said the difficulties in applying the act, rather than any lack of evidence, were a "very significant factor" in his decision. He was scathing of the law, which he described as "unnecessarily complex, incoherent and as a result almost impossible to apply to the domestic circumstances observed by the police in this case".

The decision meant the police could not bring evidence of the suspects talking, gathered using listening devices.

Professor Kevin Dawkins, an Otago University expert who specialises in criminal and international public law, told the Weekend Herald he agreed with the Solicitor-General's conclusions about the Terrorism Suppression Act. When the September 11 attacks occurred in the US, there was already a bill before Parliament which was intended to implement New Zealand's treaty obligations under international anti-terrorism conventions.

Once the UN Security Council adopted mandatory and binding resolutions in the wake of 9/11, New Zealand was legally obliged to enact legislation giving effect to those resolutions, Dawkins said, so it was decided to use and adapt the existing bill. "To that extent, the legislation was drafted hurriedly with a sense of urgency."

Changes to the flawed legislation were included in a 2007 amendment but the underlying problems were not addressed, he said.

In light of the Solicitor-General's heavy criticism of the act, the Government agreed to send it to the Law Commission to consider amending it, to cover the conduct of individuals who create risk to, or public concern about, the preservation of public safety and security. However, the commission, with the agreement of former Justice Minister Simon Power, later dropped the review of the act from its work programme.

Power, who has since left politics, said yesterday he could not recall why the decision was made to not re-examine legislation that had been found so wanting by the Solicitor General. His successor, Judith Collins said yesterday the Government had no plans to resume the work.

<http://www.stuff.co.nz/national/38820/The-accidental-terrorist-Tame-Itis-story>

Tame Iti's arrest last week added another chapter to a colourful life. **Tony Wall** explores the many faces of the Tuhoe warrior and asks whether he is more 'thespian than terrorist'.

From the road it resembles a farmer's implement shed, a ramshackle hut surrounded by car tyres and toetoe near the banks of the Whakatane River.

Inside: the remains of a boil-up, shopping bags full of personal documents, a mattress on a low-slung mezzanine, two fridges crammed with food.

Reading material includes the business section of the Sunday Star-Times and Mana magazine, and there is a desk with a computer monitor.

On the walls there are photos the Ruatoki Senior Maori Cultural Group circa 1991, and a framed black and white picture from the 70s of a group of Maori with impressive afros.

This is where Tame Iti stays when in Ruatoki. But when police came calling on Monday morning as part of their now notorious nationwide raids, Iti was not here. He was at his partner Maria Steens' small Lockwood flat in Whakatane.

The armed offenders squad were also in Whakatane where they played a recorded message ordering the occupants of the flat outside.

Iti was laid out on the ground and a gun pointed at his head.

Steens and her 17-year-old daughter, who would later wear a "Free Tame Iti" T-shirt to her stepfather's court appearances, emerged in their nighties.

Back in Ruatoki, officers spent the rest of the day removing items, including the computer's hard drive, from Iti's shed.

But was this a terrorist's lair, the local version of Unabomber Ted Kaczynski's Montana cabin, or just a place where Iti went for some peace and quiet?

Iti has been charged with 11 counts of unlawful possession of firearms, including Molotov cocktails, a .22 Ruger, another .22 rifle and a military-style Saiga 7.62 rifle, and is now in Waikeria Prison while police decide whether to lay terrorism charges.

He is a complex character who moves with ease between different worlds, one day playing the fearsome Tuhoe warrior fighting colonial oppression, the next hanging out with Remuera millionaires. There's Tame Iti the activist, Tame Iti the artist and actor, Tame Iti the social worker and Tame Iti the family man.

His millionaire associates include art patron Jenny Gibbs (who this week distanced herself from the man: "I only dealt with him over the return of the McCahon and I've absolutely no comment to make on this latest thing).

He took the stage in Auckland, then Vienna, telling the Tuhoe story in *The Tempest*, a multi-media production that also featured projected images of Algerian asylum seeker Ahmed Zaoui, who he met over lunch at the Corban Estate Arts Centre.

Last month he flew to Fiji for an audience with coup leader, Commodore Frank Bainimarama.

His son, Toi, told National Radio last week his father was "just a 55-year-old man with diabetes" who would never dream of "blowing up innocent children at shopping malls it's not his style".

Sunday Star-Times columnist and Canterbury University academic Rawiri Taonui describes Iti in today's paper as: "A master of theatre, not a terrorist. He showed his bum to the Waitangi Tribunal, and has spat with great aplomb and even greater accuracy in the direction of a governor-general, a prime minister and the assembled Labour Maori MPs.

"He shotgunned a flag because he is a freedom fighter for rights, not a killer. He may have some Molotov cocktails but who would he throw them at? No Pakeha train passes by, and 737s fly too high.

"Iti co-hosts a boys' agony programme for emotionally distraught brothers once a week on Maori TV and then hangs about in Ponsonby cafes. He wears camouflage gear, but doesn't have the body type for special ops."

But one woman who refused to be named, but who has known Iti for years, says the activist is a "chameleon".

"He morphs and melds, having an innate cunning to provide the persona desired by his audience. Tame's performances are a diversionary tactic and we all see him as a likeable character that's the game."

In court, police will claim that Iti was one of the organisers of a network, including environmental and peace activists, who were trying to obtain weapons to launch some kind of action.

A Star-Times source, who has seen documents relating to the case against Iti, says it is clear police believed from their intercepted conversations, including dozens of almost childlike text messages, that the group was preparing for action.

Three months ago, Iti allegedly told associates he was cutting back his work at the Tuhoe Hauora health trust in Ruatoki (Iti ran weekly sessions for adults with drug and alcohol problems) because he was "ready to make war on New Zealand".

According to the police file, the source says, Iti went to an Auckland gun dealer and legally bought a quantity of standard ammunition, but then went back to the dealer, who is alleged to have underworld links, and asked about purchasing a grenade launcher.

"The dealer indicated, according to the police surveillance, that he would provide the grenade launcher, but there's nothing in the file to say if it was ever delivered or not," the source said.

Police also indicated they had photographs of Iti meeting with a key, unnamed individual near Whakatane.

The police file says Iti christened the group "Rama", the Maori word for enlightenment, and had also obtained a "green book IRA manual".

Steens, a social worker, scoffs at the suggestion her partner of 10 years is a terrorist.

"I wouldn't hang out with a man who's a terrorist. If those allegations are true, I don't know when he fits it all in," she said.

Asked why Iti would be associating with environmental activists, she said: "I guess he's as passionate as the rest of us in terms of environmental issues. Tame's friends are so broad he doesn't just hang out with Maori activists, he hangs out with all sorts of people Maori and Pakeha."

Steens said she and Iti were part of the Te Mana Motuhake o Tuhoe movement fighting for the tribe's self determination. "It's a collective thing, it's not just Tame."

Another member of the movement, Henare Heremia, said Iti had a reputation for taking young people who had gone off the rails, or been "nurse maided and corrupted" by their mothers, and putting them back on track.

"To me he's a judge and executioner in one because he knows the families and knows the youth in Tuhoe. He becomes the executioner he kicks them up the arse and makes them work, hard labour and all that. That's what all these camps were about taking them up there into the ngahere (bush) and scaring the shit out of them and moulding them back into a warrior."

One of those boys was George Baker, who went on to bash Liam Ashley to death in the back of a prison van last year. Child, Youth and Family placed Baker into Iti's care when he was about 12 or 13, against his mother's wishes. She said Baker was scared of Iti and ran away several times.

Iti's supporters claim that he has the full backing of all his "whanau" in the Ruatoki valley, but the Star-Times spoke to people who are sick of him.

"I don't think he's a danger in that sense," one woman said. "But he's one of these idiots who fires his rifle off. He only has to slip... all the maraes have clamped down on him he's not to bring his guns on to the marae any more, they've had enough."

Another man said: "It's about time they (police) sorted him out."

Perhaps understandably, they refused to give their names.

Among Iti's Auckland contacts is millionaire car dealer John Murphy. Murphy supports the Maori sovereignty movement and flew a tino rangatiratanga flag from his Remuera house in February.

Murphy travelled with Iti to Fiji to meet Bainimarama last month.

Murphy is understood to be under investigation as part of the current operation.

He is a friend of Jamie Lockett, one of those arrested last week as part of the police raids, and is believed to have introduced Lockett and Iti.

The Star-Times had a bizarre conversation with Murphy last week.

Murphy: "The police are listening to our conversation at the moment. But we've got members of our group, our foot soldiers, as young as 12, that are quite verse with the forest. They go to the likes of Kings Prep on the northern slopes of Remuera, they're very well spoken and they're very, very nice young men, and they go under the code of PT."

SST: "What does that stand for?"

Murphy: "Just remember PT."

Further attempts to draw Murphy on his involvement with Iti were unsuccessful.

It is clear from interviews Iti has given over the years that he is fully aware that law enforcement authorities are monitoring his activities. Just this month while

talking to Radio Live about his trip to Fiji: "I'm always aware that my phone is being tapped by the SIS."

And he told Waatea urban Maori radio that his reputation had made world travel difficult.

"I'm kinda blacklisted in some countries around the world too. Australia, I've been flying in and out of Australia for nearly 40 years. Now I can't just fly into Australia any more, because they have visas. If they're not paranoid about Islamics or Arabs, they get paranoid about people like you and I."

Tame Iti clearly understands the value of the arts as a political platform. He once exhibited bags of dirt from the Tuhoe confiscation lines. In *The Tempest*, he told audiences his earliest political protest was at a picture theatre asked to stand for "God Save the Queen", he replied, "F--- off."

Tempest was directed by Samoan choreographer, Lemi Ponifasio. Last week, the 40-year-old head of the Mau (which means "revolution" in Samoan) dance troupe called Iti an "intelligent and very wise leader of his community" an energetic and resourceful person who doesn't drink or smoke and barely sleeps.

Ponifasio says he was invited to the Urewera camps: "He thought I could be an interesting role model.

"I haven't been there. Yet."

He doesn't believe they were military-style training grounds. "It's young men who get together. It's like wananga (learning centres). It's just that."

Ponifasio says *The Tempest* gave Iti a "powerful platform".

"People have paid to shut up for 90 minutes and watch Tame say what he wants to say. It's a good strategy."

Iti is like a prophet says Ponifasio. "He's trying to lead people to a new place, where people might never want to go to."

Who should be afraid of Tame Iti? Ponifasio laughs. "Ignorant people. Obviously."

Heremia, Iti's Tuhoe activist colleague, said Iti was as much an actor as an activist.

"He's just a movie star, like all Tuhoe, we love playing up to the media and the TV cameras."

Yet there is no necessary contradiction between Iti's adventures in the sometimes superficial world of theatre and his utterly serious political concerns. The arts and politics are not uncommon bedfellows: Ronald Reagan was a movie star; former Czech president Vaclav Havel was a playwright; Stalin was an acclaimed romantic poet; even Saddam Hussein knocked out a few novels.

"There have been times here where I've had to step in and caution people," Heremia says. "(Tame Iti) is just one man, but if you take that mask off, he's got a whole bloody (Tuhoe) nation behind him."

Crown considers options for retrial

21 Mar, 2012 05:30 AM

<https://www.nzherald.co.nz/kahu/crown-considers-options-for-retrial/LEUVA45VERMXLTIX3HE4JJQKXA/>





By

Anna Leask

Senior Journalist - crime and justice

After the failure of jurors to reach a decision on the lead charge of belonging to an organised criminal group, the Crown is now faced with a major decision - whether to retry the "Urewera Four".

The police have indicated they were still keen to act on the information gathered in their year-long investigation, Operation Eight.

Last night's verdict was the culmination of a six-week trial and police case estimated to have cost up to \$2.5 million.

Now the Crown must decide whether it will seek a retrial, and a legal expert says a decision may have been made in advance.

Police last night acknowledged the outcome of the trial but would not comment on their next move.

"Our role is to put the best evidence available before the court. We believe we did that," said Commissioner Peter Marshall.

"We will be taking the advice of crown counsel on any further representations to the court."

Mr Marshall said police needed to act on the information that was gathered before October 2007 and he will continue to support staff.

Prosecutor Ross Burns said the Crown would consider a retrial on the lead charge of belonging to an organised criminal group, on which the jurors could not reach a decision.

"Ordinarily, the Crown would proceed to a retrial, but it will have to consider it carefully in this case."

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A nation divided: Inside the Urewera Four trial

24 Mar 05:30 AM

Auckland University law professor Scott Optican, who specialises in evidence and criminal procedure, said there were lots of important factors the Crown would have to consider when deciding whether to retry the four.

The most important was whether they believed they had enough evidence that would allow a newly constituted jury to convict the defendants beyond reasonable doubt - and whether they could reach a verdict at all a second time around.

"Obviously, when they went for the first trial they felt they had a prima facie case," Mr Optican said.

"They have to decide whether they still think that now. Do they have enough of a case to go forward a second time with a differently constituted jury?"

Mr Optican said public interest was equally important.

"Is it in the interest of the public to retry? Is it worth the time and the money?"

He said the Crown also needed to consider the perception of seriousness and the likely punishment that would be handed out and balance that with the resources required for a second trial.

He expected that decision to be made very soon.

"There's no real timeframe. They will announce if they will bring the charges again reasonably soon, I think. They'll make a reasonably quick decision and you can see why they would.

"Why would they want to drag it out? Obviously they are going to have to make a decision and that may have already happened."

Mr Optican said the verdicts had been a long time coming and the Crown needed to consider their next move very carefully.

"They did get the defendants on some of the charges.

"From their perspective, they got half of their case. Now, they must decide if they are satisfied with that. We'll just have to wait and see."

Urewera raids compo bid launched

Ian Steward08:35, Mar 03 2014

<http://www.stuff.co.nz/national/9782385/Urewera-raids-compo-bid-launched?rm=m>

Six people connected to the Urewera "terror raids" case have launched a compensation bid for alleged breaches of the Bill of Rights Act.

Te Rangikaiwhiria Kemara and five members of the Lambert family, whose Auckland house was raided, filed a suit against the Crown in the High Court at Auckland last month alleging unlawful search and seizure.

Tuhoe Lambert was among the 18 originally charged over military-style camps in the Urewera Ranges but he died before the trial could start. His son Neuton Lambert was named in court papers as one of the plaintiffs.

The group is reportedly claiming \$100,000 each.

Their lawyer, Charl Hirschfeld, said the Lambert family ranged in ages from a young person to an elderly woman and included a sister-in-law who was at the house when it was raided by police.

The raids took place on October 15, 2007. Four people arrested in the raids were eventually convicted of firearms charges.

At the time, Neuton Lambert described the raids saying he and his girlfriend were in a sleepout when armed police surrounded it with dogs and spotlights.

The family was made to line up on their knees on the ground with their hands behind their heads.

He said the raids were "completely overdone".

<https://www.ipca.govt.nz/site/publications-and-media/2013-media-releases/2013-may-22-operation-eight.aspx>

22 May 2013

An Independent Police Conduct Authority report has found that Police acted unlawfully in establishing road blocks and detaining and searching people during 'Operation Eight'.

The Authority today released the results of its independent investigation into the Police operation which focused on the activities of a group of people who appeared to be involved in military-style training camps based in the remote Urewera forest in the Eastern Bay of Plenty.

The Authority received multiple complaints about the Police operation which began in late 2005 and ended on 15 October 2007 with the coordinated execution of 41 search warrants throughout the country, along with the establishment of road blocks at Ruatoki and Taneatua.

The nature of complaints received by the Authority ranged from the impact on the community of armed AOS officers at a road block to feelings of ill-treatment by Police during the execution of search warrants at properties. The Authority has investigated Police actions at 11 properties.

Independent Police Conduct Authority Chair Judge Sir David Carruthers said today that the decision by the then Commissioner of Police to undertake the operation in Ruatoki Valley and elsewhere on 15 October 2007 was reasonable and justified.

"However, the road blocks established by Police at Ruatoki and Taneatua were unlawful, unjustified and unreasonable. While Police were warranted in taking steps to address possible risk to public safety there was no justification for believing there was a general threat to the people of Ruatoki.

"Police had no legal basis for stopping and searching vehicles or photographing drivers or passengers," he said.

The report also found that Police planning and preparation for the establishment of the road blocks was deficient.

“The road block at Ruatoki and the presence of armed Police officers was intimidating and the report states that there was no assessment of the likely impact of this activity on the local community,” Sir David said.

The report also showed that the detention of the occupants at five properties examined by the Authority was unlawful and unreasonable.

“While Police have the power to restrict the movement of people to prevent a search being interfered with, they cannot lead people to reasonably believe they are being detained. In a number of cases here they did so.”

In addition, the Authority found that personal searches conducted by Police on a number of occupants were unlawful.

The planning and preparation for the execution of search warrants was largely in accordance with policy, although the Authority found that one person’s inclusion in the search warrant application was unjustified.

“There were huge logistical challenges given that search warrants had to be executed simultaneously across the country. Those individuals who were considered by Police to pose the greatest risk were quickly and safely apprehended.

“No shots were fired by Police or others, all arrests occurred without incident and no members of the public were put at risk,” Sir David said.

The Authority made a number of recommendations to Police following its investigation including changes to policy and practice relating to the use of road blocks, as well as the introduction of more general community impact assessments before searches in major operations and better planning for children and vulnerable people.

“The Authority recommends that Police re-engage with Tuhoe and take appropriate steps to build bridges with the Ruatoki community,” Sir David said.

It noted that the introduction of the Search and Surveillance Act 2012 has affected relevant law, and led to changes in practice since the operation.

In undertaking its investigation the Authority reviewed and analysed the entire Police file relating to Operation Eight in order to properly examine and determine the individual complaints. Interviews with complainants, witnesses and Police were also conducted.

The Authority is an independent oversight body concerned with receiving complaints against the Police. In this instance the Authority’s investigation considered Police policy, practice and procedure in relation to complaints received on the planning and

preparation of Operation Eight, the road blocks established on 15 October 2007 and the execution of search warrants at various addresses.

The report released today sets out the general findings with the Authority reporting directly to each complainant regarding specific matters raised.

Up until now the Authority has been unable to report on the Operation Eight investigation because of ongoing court proceedings. The Supreme Court decision on April 23 2013 dismissed applications for leave to appeal by the four people who faced criminal charges following the Operation.

Urewera raids traumatised people

Aimee Gulliver18:10, Dec 19 2013

<http://www.stuff.co.nz/national/crime/9536679/Urewera-raids-traumatised-people?rm=m>

Innocent people were exposed to unnecessary trauma and had their human rights hindered by police actions during the Urewera raids, the Human Rights Commission has found.

The raids focused on the activities of a group of people who appeared to be involved in military-style training camps in the Urewera forest in the Eastern Bay of Plenty.

The Human Rights Commission received 31 complaints about police actions, including being stopped at a roadblock at Ruatoki and being photographed without consent, the negative implications of using the Terrorism Suppression Act, and the impact on children confined for several hours, some without food.

The report issued today on Operation Eight focused on the innocent people affected, and not those arrested or charged, Chief Commissioner David Rutherford said.

"These people had done nothing wrong and did not break any laws but had their basic rights trampled."

No comprehensive assessment of the impact on the innocent people was carried out, and insufficient support was given to them, the report says.

"It's very clear more should have been done in the immediate aftermath to support innocent people," Rutherford said.

"We make five recommendations to help ensure negative impacts are minimised in the future.

"On the positive side, much progress has been made since 2007.

"We're pleased to see police have made changes to their processes and policies to ensure this doesn't happen again."

New search and surveillance legislation had been introduced since Operation Eight, which addressed much of the behaviour complained about, Rutherford said.

An Independent Police Conduct Authority report in May found that police acted unlawfully in establishing roadblocks and detaining and searching people during Operation Eight in 2007.

"The commission's report follows the conclusion of related court cases and the release of the IPCA report earlier this year," Rutherford said.

"We considered it inappropriate to release our analysis before the completion of these two matters."

Rutherford hoped the report would help further repair the relationship between police and Tuhoe leadership.

Tuhoe community 10 years after the Urewera raids

Jo Lines-MacKenzie05:00, Oct 14 2017

<https://www.stuff.co.nz/national/95416168/tuhoe-community-10-years-after-the-urewera-raids>

A long time ago, a bus full of children was driving to school through through a sleepy green valley.

It was a quiet, simple place. Every pupil had grown up on the same soil that nourished their parents, grandparents and ancestors into the mists of time.

Yet none of them had that in mind. The boys and girls joked and talked like it was any other school day.



DOMINICO ZAPATA/STUFF

Tame Iti wants people to remember the Urewera raids through art.

Cities and the powerful people whose laws ruled the land were a long way away.

READ MORE:

- *[Urewera raids traumatised people](#)
- *[Urewera police raid actions 'unlawful'](#)
- *[Urewera terror raid case a 'house of cards'](#)
- *[Former Urewera raids protester on regional council committee](#)
- *[Urewera raids compo bid launched](#)

Or so they thought. For on this day, they came to their door.



STUFF

The sleepy townships of Taneatua and Ruatoki were changed on October 15, 2007 (file photo).

Men dressed in black burst on to the bus. Their guns were drawn. The children screamed in fear.

And, really, that was not so long ago. Just 10 years since the government ordered police to conduct the "Urewera terrorist raids".

The raids in the Ruatoki Valley and elsewhere on October 15, 2007, saw 17 people face a total of 291 charges under the Arms Act, including the illegal possession of an AK-47-style rifle, a double-barrel sawn-off shotgun, other military-style semi-automatic firearms and Molotov cocktails.



DOMINICO ZAPATA/STUFF

Huka Irene Williams' grandchildren were bullied after the raids after some family members, including Williams, were detained.

Of those, most defendants had their charges dropped when evidence was ruled inadmissible in court. The "Urewera Four" - Tame Iti, Te Rangikaiwhiria Kemara, Urs Signer and Emily Bailey - were convicted in 2012

The Human Rights Commission received 31 complaints about police actions during the raids, including being stopped at a roadblock at Ruatoki and being photographed without consent, the negative implications of using the Terrorism Suppression Act, and the impact on children confined for several hours, some without food.

Iti and Kemara were sentenced to two-and-a-half years' jail in May 2012, while Bailey and Signer were sentenced to nine months of home detention.



STUFF

Tame Iti used his own teeth in a carved walking stick he made while serving his sentence for firearm charges after the Urewerea raids. (file photo).

Iti, a long-time Tuhoe activist, was released from prison on February 27, 2013.

He has not forgotten, but he has moved on.

"You don't really want to take ownership of something that wasn't really your f...-up. It wasn't ours.



DOMINICO ZAPATA/STUFF

Huka Irene Williams' granddaughter Whitiaira Purewa was three when the raids happened.

"But they apologised and that is it. Put it down on the corner there. People can write stories about it, poetry about it, do a theatre, do a comedy show out of it."

We visited Iti a fortnight out from the 10-year anniversary of the raids and he didn't want to talk about what happened on October 15, 2007.

As we pulled into the township of Taneatua, we got a text message saying "Tuhoe moving on."



STUFF

Police apology to the local iwi and hapu in Ruatoki from Police Commissioner Mike Bush, left, with Tamati Kruger, centre, and Tame Iti in August 2014 (file photo).

He did eventually sit down with us for a few minutes later in the day.

"It's another date. When I say we're moving on, we've moved on after 10 years. It's just another day.

"This will be the last time reporters come and talk to us about the raids."



NZ POLICE

Deputy Chief Executive for Māori Assistant Commissioner Wally Haumaha was responsible for restoring the relationship between Tuhoe and the police (file photo).

Iti has accepted the apology Police Commissioner Mike Bush gave the people of Tuhoe and the community on August 13, 2014.

"Many things have happened. I think we've gone through the process of the settlement.

"So we've gone through that and we've gone through nearly 200 years of psychological abuse by the state and the Crown, so we've gone past all of that."



DOMINICO ZAPATA/STUFF

Tame Iti has put his arrest during a series of dawn raids 10 years ago behind him.

Iti has operated an art gallery on the main street of Taneatua for the past three years.

"We create this space to keep communication open. Provoking thoughts and conversation is important. I think a part of what happened 10 years ago is something that people need to write a book about, do a movie about, do a comedy show.

"Those things will carry on, but we don't take that internally. I think people will always remember the 15th of October and it will always be in the memory of people, but can't prevent the way it's reported.

"We write poetry and music, talk to our children about it. We can write books about what happened to nanny and papa. I think it's a good time for people to be creative," Iti said.

One community member who can't forget that day and who hasn't moved on is Huka Irene Williams.

Williams was detained at gunpoint on the lawn outside her workplace and told to lie face-down for three to four hours. She was neither arrested nor charged, nor told she was free to leave.

She said her husband and son were also detained, and although her son was charged with firearms offences, the charges were later dropped.

The 52 year old is laid up with a broken hip after a car accident a few weeks before, but shares what October 15 means to her.

"I think for our family, it's still quite raw and it's a bit of struggle sometimes," Williams said.

There is still a stigma around it for her family. Her son has never bounced back from it.

"But for the community, for some families, I think the apology helped in some ways. Some of the families who didn't get an apology, they still have a lot of issues. I think the apologies were a good gesture, but it didn't help the psychological stuff. It didn't help our children and our relationship with the Crown," Williams said.

It has had an effect on all her grandchildren who witnessed the raids.

"They saw the whole thing. They would then go to school and hear the kids talking about saying you are the terrorists and stigmatised for it. I think it's like how communities think of the Muslims living in our community - they were kind of treated like that in their community. Some of our grandchildren were bullied," Williams said.

She herself has never recovered. She gets paranoid when she has to go out of the valley. After reading the reports and knowing that the residents were being monitored, she worries that people are still spying on her, especially when she goes to Auckland.

"My anxiety has increased and I get a bit paranoid about it, and even my children - I wonder what are they up to and are they being spied on," Williams said.

She will never move from Ruatoki. Her parents were full-blooded Tuhoe and they lived there their entire lives.

There needs to be more thought about that day, Williams said. It should be a day "to celebrate our people or a day dedicated to Tuhoe" instead of focusing on the negativity.

"I don't blame the police. It wasn't the police - it was the special armed forces. I have a lot of anger towards the Labour Party. I will never support them again," Williams said.

She doesn't think there is anything the government can do now - the damage is done. It's just time that's needed.

"Apologies can always be broken. It's not a treaty, it's not a binding thing. You can apologise tomorrow and be different the next day," Williams said.

Deputy Chief Executive Māori/Assistant Commissioner Wally Haumaha was responsible for restoring the relationship between Tuhoe and the police on behalf of the police commissioner at the time of the raids.

"It's important to note that following that day - October 15, 2007 - we immediately engaged with Tuhoe the very next day in response to the issues that were starting to come through as a result of that operation.

"The police were generally concerned about the events that took place on that day," Haumaha said.

He said that it took from 2007 to 2014 for the police to win back the trust and confidence of the Tuhoe people.

"We've learned some significant lessons in terms of the community. We now have in place a community impact assessment report which requires the police

to undertake certain things before we go into a community. It makes sure we are engaging with the right people.

"A lot of our time now we continue to dialogue with Tuhoe leaders on a regular basis, building trust and confidence, heading up annual meetings together, running search-and-rescue operations."

The police are thankful that Tuhoe were open and willing to work reciprocally with them.

This has enabled the two parties to reach their current point, which is to focus on working both nationally and locally to build that greater relationship between police and Tuhoe and all iwi Māori across the country.

Tuhoe leader Tamati Kruger said that while the raids are these days seen as a non-event there is no desire for those directly affected by them to commemorate the day in anyway.

"It is largely seen by people as a disruption and interruption. It's something that happened and we've gone past that I think that is the general view.

"Also the satisfaction that we were able to repair as best as we could the damage to the relationship between the Tuhoe community and the police," Kruger said.

Kruger acknowledges that the government acted on the advice of the police commissioner at the time, Howard Broad. What he is disappointed in is that after the raids no government group came in concerned about the welfare of the Taneatua and Ruatoki community.

"It was regarded as a crime scene for weeks. There was no government group that said, we should go in there and see if the people are well mentally, emotionally - what about the children? What about the families of those whose partners had been arrested? Can they still afford food, pay bills? What about the trauma to children and to older people? What about questions around their rights?

"Tuhoe were left to their own devices, to save themselves. So that was no different to what happened to us in 1867. The [2007] raid is not a landmark event that we use within Tuhoe to measure how far we have come and how far we have improved. The real marker we use is 1867, when the collisions and the warfare between us and the Crown started. That is our time-frame measurement," Kruger said.

Tuhoe had to wait for two police commissioners to vacate their positions before they got an apology, Kruger said. Current Police Commissioner Mike Bush understood quickly that a relationship had to be established and was open and filled with goodwill towards that aim and that is why it was done.

Tuhoe know that waiting something like five years in order to have the conversation was unnecessarily long, but they're grateful it wasn't 170 years.

"The marking of a new relationship improving and rebuilding trust and confidence and goodwill and openness I would say is on track since 10 years ago.

"But does that mean that we are not expecting any trouble between Tuhoe and the police? Of course not.

"There will be events and incidents and of course there will be trouble. But what has happened with the experience now that we've had on fixing and repairing relationships, we are a lot more open and prepared to fix up glitches that may occur.

"We now have the confidence we can do that. We are not delusional that everything is sweet-as forever and ever - no. We are all human beings and things happen that are beyond our control, but we accept that but we are now more prepared to come together and resolve those. I have reminded the police that Tuhoe is similarly an anti-criminal organisation as well,"

Kruger accepts that the trauma and suffering from October 2007 has affected some people forever and that hurt cannot be cured.

"As a community, as a tribal community, we have got over it and that we are pleased with the fact that we were part of a solution of rebuilding the relationship. All the system could do was criminalise and adjudicate blame and guilt. That is all the justice system can do and that is what it was built to do.

"It was not built to repair relationships. The justice systems are not in the business of love and care. People and communities are, so only they can do that."

Ten years on from the Urewera raids

8:13 am on 13 October 2017

<https://www.rnz.co.nz/news/te-manu-korihi/341457/ten-years-on-from-the-urewera-raids>



Shannon Haunui-Thompson, Te Manu Korihi Editor
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Ten years ago, with new anti-terrorism powers under their belt, police swooped on the people of Tūhoe in what has come to be known as the Urewera raids.



Tame Iti outside Auckland District Court in December 2007. He was sentenced to jail in 2012. Photo: GETTY IMAGES

They set up two unlawful road blocks in Ruatoki and Taneatua, detained innocent people and searched private property while hunting for people they believed were involved in military-style training camps in Te Urewera Ranges.

Police believed more than 60 people had attended six training camps in 2006 and 2007 and that they had used a range of weapons, including Molotov cocktails, and had been practising ambush and interrogation techniques.

The raids took place in the early hours of Monday morning on 15 October 2007. The Armed Offenders Squad raided homes around the country looking for terrorists - people they claimed wanted to hurt New Zealand politicians and bomb parliament.

But none of the 17 people arrested ended up facing charges under the Terrorism Suppression Act after the Solicitor-General said the evidence was insufficient.

In the end, four people were found guilty in 2012 of illegally possessing firearms. Tame Iti and Rangikaiwhiria Kemara were sentenced to 30 months imprisonment and Urs Signer and Emily Bailey were given home detention.



Deep In Te Urewera National Park, looking towards East Cape. Photo: Wikimedia Commons

The effects of the raids still linger for many families, including for Ati Teepa, who was away from his home when it was raided.

"I think there is still lots of unresolved issues around the raids, particularly some of the young children that were caught up in the raids. My brother's young family saw the guys in

the masks and the guns, they saw their grandfather and father dragged out of the home early hours of the morning in the dark."

It would have been terrifying, he said.

"I think there are still issues for those young tamariki - and it wasn't just my brother's tamariki, there were children in other homes."

Police have worked hard to restore their relationship with Tūhoe iwi members, especially the tamariki.



Police Commissioner Mike Bush and kaumatua at Te Rewarewa Mara in 2014. Photo: RNZ / Mani Dunlop

In 2014, Police Commissioner Mike Bush travelled to the Tūhoe community, and while not prepared to apologise for the investigation itself, he did express regret for the way police acted.

"Especially in respect to searches and detaining people that were unlawful, so we have apologised for that. Also just in the way we actually treated people with disrespect, particularly the innocent people, the young people - the tamariki and mokopuna," he said at the time.

Mr Teepa said he appreciated the police had tried hard to make amends, but his whānau didn't want an apology.

"We didn't want them in the home and we didn't want to meet with them, we didn't want to be part of what I cynically see as a public relations exercise where they were coming to seek forgiveness from Tūhoe.

"I don't know why they had to make such a big song and dance out of something that could've been a private affair," Mr Teepa said.

Tūhoe leader Tamati Kruger said the terrorist allegations were completely unbelievable and a shock for Tūhoe iwi members, with some believing it was a plot to stop the 2013 Tūhoe settlement with the Crown.

"Some Tūhoe people saw this as a body of proof of the anti-Tūhoe stance of the government and the Crown that stretches back to 1850 and there were other Tūhoe people that were severely hurt by the experience," Mr Kruger said.

Tūhoe took it upon themselves to reconcile with police, which Mr Kruger said was an example of mana motuhake (self determination).

"When you can deal with your own issues you have mana motuhake, when you use your own traditions and customs to do that.

"Ten years later that reconciliation is sustainable and reliable, between ourselves and the police."



Tame Iti. Photo: RNZ/Justine Murray

Tame Iti served 9 months of his 30 month jail sentence and now wants to put the raids behind him and focus on the future.

"Honestly I don't really want to go back to that and I don't want to justify and have to explain myself.

"Moving on, you let go. It happened."

Since the raids, no one has ever been successfully charged and convicted under the Terrorism Suppression Act.

Most expensive case in NZ history

22 Mar, 2012 05:30 AM 2 minutes to read



A roadblock in the Ruatoki Valley during the anti-terrorism raids. Photo / Alan Gibson



By

Jared Savage

Investigative Journalist

More than \$2.8 million of taxpayers' money has been spent on legal aid for the 18 people arrested in the Urewera raids - and the bill is likely to rise even higher.

Figures released to the Herald show more than \$1 million in legal aid has been paid to defence lawyers for the four who stood trial in the High Court at Auckland.

But the total bill for Tame Iti, Urs Signer, Te Rangikaiwhiria Kemara and Emily Bailey will be much larger once their lawyers file invoices to the Ministry of Justice for the five-week trial which ended on Tuesday.

The legal aid bill for a fifth defendant, Tuhoe Lambert, was \$132,692. He died before the trial started.

A further \$1.63 million has been paid to the lawyers of 13 other accused whose charges from the October 2007 raids were dropped last year when the Supreme Court ruled the evidence against them was gathered unlawfully.

The \$2.83 million paid in legal aid for the defence so far is more than the 2009 retrial of David Bain, which cost taxpayers more than \$2 million.

Figures released by the Crown Law Office show \$322,412 was spent on prosecutors to work on the case up until the trial started in mid-February. This is also expected to rise once invoices for the trial have been filed.

The police have declined to give a detailed breakdown of costs, but have provided an "aggregate figure" of \$500,462.

The case was taken through the District Court, High Court, Court of Appeal and the Supreme Court, which increased the total cost of the prosecution.

The total of \$3.65 million makes it the most expensive case in New Zealand history.

Related articles

KAHU

A nation divided: Inside the Urewera Four trial

24 Mar 05:30 AM

And the Crown could seek a second trial for Iti, Signer, Kemara and Bailey after the jury was unable to reach a verdict on the charge of participating in an organised crime group. That decision will be announced at a call-over hearing on April 18.

The four will be sentenced on May 24 on the firearms charges the jury found them guilty of.

RISING BILL

Legal aid: \$2.83 million and rising
Crown: \$322,412 and rising
Police: \$500,462
TOTAL: \$3.65 million so far.

October 15, 2021

Tame Iti to play himself in Tūhoe raids film

<https://waateanews.com/2021/10/15/tame-iti-to-play-himself-in-tuhoe-raids-film/>



A film about the 2007 Tūhoe raids is set to hit New Zealand screens.

On this day 14 years ago armed police swooped on homes in Rūātoki and other centres to arrest people under suspicion of terrorism.

Activist Tame Iti, who was imprisoned on arms charges which were brought once the terrorism allegations fell through, has teamed up with filmmaker Tearepa Kahi and actor Cliff Curtis to make Muru.

Like Kahi's previous films Poi E: The Story of our Song and Mt. Zion, it will be released around Waitangi day. Kahi says it was made with a Merata Mita and Geoff Murphy spirit, a Tame Iti authenticity and a Cliff Curtis commitment to craft.

The te reo Māori language film was shot on location in Te Urewera and Rūātoki, with cinematography by Fred Renata, editing by Academy Award winner John Gilbert and soundtrack by Mahuia Bridgman-Cooper.

Lead Producer Reikura Kahi says Muru is not a re-creation of the events which occurred on October 15th, but a story which weaves the deep past and the recent present together, in order to reach a place of greater understanding.

Muru is the first feature film to be funded under the New Zealand Film Commission's He Pounamu Te Reo Māori Feature Film Fund.

Film inspired by 2007 Urewera raids premieres in Auckland

By [Te Aniwa Hurihanganui](#), Māori Affairs Correspondent

Thu, Jul 28Source: 1News

<https://www.1news.co.nz/2022/07/28/film-inspired-by-2007-urewera-raids-premieres-in-auckland/>



Screenshot from the trailer of *Muru*, starring Cliff Curtis. (Source: Supplied)

Directed by Tearepa Kahi, the film will show how armed police swooped in on the people of Tūhoe, detained innocent people, and left an enduring impact on the community.

Nita Ngamotu had just moved out of Ruatoki when the raids began. She saw everything unfold on the news.

"My mum and my younger sister were separated and they were put down in my shed with my younger brother, who was three years old at the time. They were strip-searched, my father was detained and arrested," she said.

"My little brother was starving, they were all starving. They had no kai that day, but they were watching the policeman eat their lunch. So, you can imagine, being a māmā watching your kids go through that."

Film inspired by Urewera raids premieres in Auckland

Play Video 02:07 To see this video, follow the URL at the top of this article

Director Tearepa Kahi says the film reflects the event's enduring impact on Tūhoe. (Source: 1News)

None of the 18 people arrested were charged under the Terrorism Suppression Act.

Kahi sought permission from the Tūhoe community to tell their story and received some challenging feedback.

"One of the people there said, 'Well, I'm keen on this because this is just gonna capture the events of a single day, whereas the Crown had been doing this to us to Tūhoe for over 100 years, and if you can tell that story then we're in.' Everyone in the whare nodded.

"I think we've come up with something that responds to the challenge that she put down and also speaks to the hearts and minds of everyone that's gonna see this," he said.

Actor Cliff Curtis plays the role of a local police officer facing tough decisions when he learns the police plan to raid his community.

"This is the character that really has to face the biggest dilemma - loyal to the badge or loyal to Tūhoe?" Kahi said.

Activist and artist Tame Iti, one of four people convicted on firearms charges after the raids, plays himself.

Kahi said no one else could have done the job.

"I refused to see any actors even though all the casting agents were offering people, saying, 'We got this guy.'

"I was like, 'No, there is only one person who can play Tame, and that is Tame.'"

There's hope the film will continue to shine a light on a dark moment in our history.

"People say 'move on'. But, how can you move on when so many people within our country are still ignorant of it?" said Kahi.

Ngamotu just wanted people to know the impact it had on her whānau.

"There's still a lot of trauma and a lot of healing to be done," she said.

"This is gonna affect my family for the rest of our lives."



1. Governing Indigenous Sovereignty: Biopolitics and the “Terror Raids” in New Zealand

Vijay Devadas

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Abstract

This chapter revisits the nationwide raids carried out by the New Zealand police on October 15, 2007, under the auspices of the 2002 Suppression of Terrorism Act, resulting in the arrests of seventeen Indigenous rights, environmental, and political activists, and anarchists. It examines the media coverage of the raids and of the March 2012 court decisions, across selected print and broadcast media outlets. It argues that mainstream media racialized “the image of terror” through an Indigenous figure: “Iti is used to stand in for the discourse of terror as part of a larger cultural practice of visualizing identity, and testifies to the power of visual culture in the politics of reproducing notions of race, terror, and criminality.” More specifically, it contends that the politics of naming “terror” can be conceived as a biopolitical project that deploys the technology of biopower to govern the sovereignty of Indigenous people.

Keywords: [raids](#), [New Zealand](#), [media](#)

[coverage](#), [terror](#), [Iti](#), [race](#), [biopolitics](#), [biopower](#), [sovereignty](#), [Indigenous people](#)

Subject

Media Studies

On March 21, 2012, the *New Zealand Herald* reported that the jury in the trial of Tame Iti, Emily Bailey, Te Rangikaiwhiria Kemara, and Urs Signer, the four individuals charged by the Crown for allegedly belonging to an organized criminal group, was unable to come to a decision on, this, the main charge.¹ They did however decide that the four individuals were guilty on firearms charges. The report, appearing in New Zealand's largest circulating broadsheet paper, which also enjoys a high web and mobile app presence, was entitled "Urewera Verdict: Freedom, for Now." The report about the March 20 jury decision on the trial of the four individuals was accompanied with an image of Tame Iti responding to questions from reporters. Iti is quoted as saying, "It's been a waste of people's time, effort and resource: that's the Crown all over. The accusations the Crown was pushing didn't stack up." The report then goes on to cover the jubilation of the four, their *whānau* (extended family), friends, and supporters, while forewarning that "they are not out of the woods yet." It cites Iti, his decision to speak only in *te reo Māori* (the Māori language) and his rendition of the nursery rhyme "Hey Diddle Diddle." The report reminds readers of the events that led to the charges, cites the police, the lawyers, politicians from the Green Party and the Maori Party, and states that "Police Minister Anne Tolley [of the National Party] declined to comment on the verdict." This report on the decision was far more *balanced* compared with how the event was reported on October 15, 2007, when the "anti-terror" raids made headlines, nationally and internationally. However, as I will argue, the media reports five years after the raids continue to reproduce a racialized visualization of terror in New Zealand.²

On October 15, 2007, it was reported that the New Zealand police, including the specialist anti-terrorist unit, raided houses nationwide and arrested seventeen Indigenous rights, environmental, and political activists, and anarchists under the auspices of two Acts—the Terrorism Suppression Act (hereafter referred to as the "Terrorism Act") put in place in 2002, one year after the U.S.-led declaration of the global war on terror, and the 1983 Arms Act.³ This was the first time the Terrorism Act was used in New Zealand, invoked after a year-long surveillance that included bugging and intercepting conversations, tapping phones and text messages, as well as secretly videotaping the alleged suspects. As noted above, the raids made national and international news. Those arrested, however, could not be charged under the Terrorism Act because, as the Solicitor-General pointed out, "the evidence fell short of actually meeting the very technical requirements of the act."⁴ In lieu of this, the government drafted the 2007 Terrorism Amendment Act, which was passed after three readings, receiving royal assent on November 19, 2007. Because those arrested could not be charged under the Terrorism Act, the

police charged the accused with multiple firearms offences. On October 2008, Iti, Kemara, Bailey, Signer and Tuhoe Lambert were charged with participating in an organized criminal group. Lambert passed away in July 2011, and in September of that year firearms charges against thirteen of the accused were dropped, but charges against Iti, Kemara, Bailey, and Signer were upheld until the March 20, 2012, verdict. Two months later, on May 24, Iti and Kemara were sentenced to two and a half years imprisonment while Bailey and Signer were sentenced to nine months home detention, all on firearms charges.

In this chapter I argue that the media coverage of the raids across selected print, online, and broadcast media outlets sought to produce a racialized moral panic around terrorism.⁵ Specifically, the media reportage of the event on that day connected and amplified a moral panic of “terror” around the figure of Iti, in particular, and the larger Indigenous community, exposing the operations of a racialized regime of visualizing terror characteristic of global media culture post 9/11. Media and Cultural Studies scholars such as Douglas Kellner, Goldie Osuri, and Joseph Pugliese, among others, have argued that the racialized regime of visualizing terror in the media has intensified, particularly post 9/11. Kellner, “in an analysis of the dominant discourses, frames, and representations that informed the media and public debate in the days following the September 11 attacks, show[s] how the mainstream media in the US privileged the ‘clash of civilizations’ model, established a binary dualism between Islamic terrorism and civilization, and largely circulated war fever and retaliatory feelings and discourses that called for and supported a form of military intervention.”⁶

Similar arguments animate Osuri’s and Pugliese’s articles, which demonstrate the intensification of racialized and polemicized forms of media coverage of the “other,” post 9/11. The point here is that what we witnessed in the media, on October 15, 2007, is part of a larger transformation in global media culture and practice that unproblematically turns to simplistic, polemic, racial, and cultural divisions to unleash “symbolic and physical violence against its designated targets.”⁷ At the same time, it must also be emphasized that the media practice of visualizing terror, while intensified post 9/11, has a much longer history. Edward Said’s *Covering Islam*, for instance, documents the extent to which the Western media, particularly the press, invoked and perpetuated specific racial and cultural stereotypes of Islam and the Muslim world. These are stereotypes that have come to be commonly linked to the discourse of terror.⁸

Five years later, on March 12, 2012, when the *New Zealand Herald* reported a key milestone in the “anti-terror” raids, confirming the Crown decision not to retry Iti, Bailey, Kemara, and Signer, it headlined with “‘Urewera Four’ will not be re-tried.” What persisted, during the five years, was a media practice that simultaneously reduces and amplifies the discourse of terror in a specific way. Five years later, reports continue to name the four individuals in a particular way—as the Urewera Four—a politics of naming that continues to link terror with a specific

place that is “inhabited by a number of iwi [peoples] and hapu [clan] generally known today as Tuhoe ... notable ... for its pronounced political and religious autonomy.”⁹ This is a community that never signed the Treaty of Waitangi and that has sought to retain Tuhoe sovereignty. Specifically, I argue that the politics of naming “terror” can be conceived as a biopolitical project aimed at governing Indigenous sovereignty. The media practices since 2007 have remained consistent: Indigeneity and terror are intimately connected and this demonstrates that the legitimacy and power of state sovereignty is built upon the notion of racialized sovereignty. The racialization of terror takes place both at the level of constructing race in terms of the simplistic division of people along ethnic (cultural) lines, as well as “the kind of racism that ... is based on new paradigms from biology, on ideas of evolutionary competition and the health of the species.”¹⁰ The latter kind of racialization marks the emergence of biopower as a new technology of power that seeks to consolidate the sovereignty upon which the nation-state anchors its power and authority.

Mediating Terror

A quick survey of a sample of print and online media coverage of the October 15, 2007, “anti-terror” police raids including the *New Zealand Herald*, *The Age* (Australia), *The Australian*, as well as the BBC, Reuters, and Bloomberg, reveals that the headlines, choice of images, and narrative were consistent and systematic: the national and international media participated in the production of a racialized moral panic of terrorism. The BBC, for example, covered the event with the headline “NZ Police Hold 17 in Terror Raids” and the report opens in this manner: “New Zealand police have arrested 17 people and seized a number of weapons during a series of ‘anti-terror’ raids. More than 300 police were involved in the operation, reportedly targeting Māori sovereignty and environmental activists.”¹¹ The report was accompanied by a file image of Iti performing a *haka* (dance or ceremonial performance) captioned: “One of those arrested was Māori rights campaigner Tame Iti.” The *New Zealand Herald* reported the event as follows: Two hunters alerted police to the presence of armed men in camouflage in the Ureweras after stumbling into their camp, the *Herald* can reveal. Police today arrested 17 people in nationwide raids linked to alleged weapons training camps in the Bay of Plenty. The story of what the hunters saw ... forms part of the background to an extensive investigation by 300 police including the specialist police anti-terrorist unit. The raids appear to have targeted Māori, political and environmental activists and were conducted under the Suppression of Terrorism Act and Firearms Act. Police Commissioner Howard Broad said the sting was the culmination of a year-long investigation into the alleged guerrilla-style training camps. He said the raids were carried out in the interests of public safety.¹²

The image that accompanied the report is of the lockdown at Ruātoki (Figure 1.1).



Figure 1.1.

[Open in new tab](#)[Download slide](#)

“Armed police stop vehicles at a checkpoint near the Bay of Plenty settlement of Ruatoki,” *New Zealand Herald*, **October 16, 2007. Photograph by Alan Gibson.**

Reproduced with permission of the *New Zealand Herald*.

Likewise, Melbourne newspaper *The Age* reported with a photo of Iti, but unlike the other cited reports, the focus here, from the beginning, was on Iti:

New Zealand police have allegedly discovered weapons training camps in a series of antiterrorism raids under way today. Prominent Māori activist Tame Iti was among those taken in by police, his lawyer Louis Tekani told Fairfax Media. He is facing arms charges this afternoon in the Rotorua District Court.¹³

Reuters reported without an image of either the raids or Iti, but ended in this way:

New Zealand, a South Pacific nation of 4.2 million people, has no history of domestic-related terrorism, although Māori, who make up around 15 percent of the population, have at times staged high-profile demonstrations and land occupations to highlight historic grievances.¹⁴

The Australian reported without images but did name Iti, as did Bloomberg, which also had a section on Māori separatists, quoting then Minister of Foreign Affairs and New Zealand First Party leader Winston Peters as saying that “Māori separatist, environmentalist and so-called

peace groups were raided.”¹⁵ The next day, the *New Zealand Herald* headlined with “Tame Iti on gun and firebomb charges,” with the image of Iti and the following opening paragraph: A line of a dozen uniformed police, two abreast, formally marched into the Rotorua District Court late yesterday afternoon and stood guard at three separate doorways inside the building—as the bail application hearing for Tame Wairere Iti, 55, and a Hamilton woman, 24, got under way.¹⁶



Figure 1.2.

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“Tame Iti was arrested after a dawn raid on a Bay of Plenty property,” *New Zealand Herald*, October 16, 2007. Photograph by Alan Gibson.

Reproduced with permission of the *New Zealand Herald*.

The reporting of the “anti-terror” raids in the media on that day framed “terror” in a specific way. The Indigenous body, or more precisely the face of Iti, is made to stand in for “terror.” “Terror,” which has no countenance, is made comprehensible through the media coverage and,

within the context of New Zealand, this mediation equates “terror” with, and through, Indigenous peoples.

The media articulation of “terror” in this reduced way did not only appear in online and print media. As Sue Abel, in an analysis of national television news bulletins screened on October 15, 2007, argues, “mass media television news and Māori-produced television news gave viewers two different stories about the ‘terror’ raids.”¹⁷ Comparing mass-media television news, or mainstream news, on two of the main free-to-air channels (TV One and TV3) including *Te Karere* (Māori-produced news on TV One) with *Ta Kaea* on Māori Television, Abel argues that the choice of images, narrative voice over, and framing, while similar at times (such as the choice of the image of the Armed Offenders Squad on *Te Karere* and TV One), were also different in significant ways. For example, Abel argues, mainstream news articulated “the ‘terror’ raids in a way that seems commonsense, straightforward and neutral” while “Māori-produced bulletins *Ta Kaea* and *Te Karere* ... offer completely different ‘maps and codes’, and very different explanatory contexts.”¹⁸ Further, Abel finds that “a significant Māori voice” was absent in mainstream news coverage, that mainstream news produced a discourse of fear around terror, and that Iti was used consistently as the image of terror. The framing of terror in the print, online, and broadcast media demonstrates the racialized visualization of terror through the figure of the Indigenous subject, but more significantly it sought to produce a highly racialized moral panic of terror.

A moral panic, according to Stuart Hall et al., begins with a distortion of the event, phenomenon, or discourse “*out of all proportion to the actual threat*” that relocates attention from the criminal act “*to the relation between the deviant act and the reaction of the public and the control agencies of the act.*”¹⁹ In other words, moral panics are characterized by a discrepancy between “what is perceived and what that is a perception of,”²⁰ a gap between the threat itself and the reaction to the threat. Hall et al. go on to discuss the concept of moral panic in relation to the discursive construction of mugging as a street crime in Britain during the early 1970s to demonstrate how mugging is racialized as a black problem, which then criminalizes the black community as a threat to the British way of life and white British sovereignty. As Stanley Cohen points out, there are five key actors in the production of moral panic: the folk devil, the media, rule enforcers (such as the police), politicians, and public opinion.²¹

In that sense it is arguable that the saturation of the image of Iti as the Indigenous “folk devil,” and the police’s and politicians’ discussions of the raids, in addition to the media coverage, testify to the production of a moral panic of terror.²² Across the spectrum of national and international media, the circulation of the image of Iti as *the* face of terror reconfigures him from campaigner for Indigenous rights and sovereignty into the figure of the terrorist. More significantly, it functions to racialize the image of terror: Iti stands in for the discourse of terror

as part of a larger cultural practice of visualizing identity, and testifies to the power of visual culture in the politics of reproducing notions of race, terror, and criminality.

Iti's image, accompanied by captions such as "Māori rights campaigner,"²³ "Veteran Māori activist,"²⁴ and "Leading Māori activist,"²⁵ simultaneously links Indigenous activism and the demand for sovereignty with terrorism, conflating Indigenous sovereignty with terrorism; in short, the Indigenous terror-subject becomes a threat to state sovereignty. Furthermore, the *New Zealand Herald* report accompanied by the image of armed police checking a vehicle captioned "Armed police stop vehicles at a check-point near the Bay of Plenty settlement of Ruātoki," connects the discourse of "terror" to a precise settlement—Ruātoki—located in the Eastern Bay of Plenty; a particular iwi, Tūhoe (central east North Island iwi); and a specific place, Te Urewera, which is the traditional land and spiritual center of Tūhoe.²⁶ It should be recalled that while numerous people throughout the country were arrested on October 15, 2007, it was only a Māori community in Ruātoki that was laid siege to. The police did not close down a suburb of Wellington and hold children at gunpoint when arresting Valerie Morse for instance.²⁷ The naming, of Ruātoki, Te Urewera, and Tūhoe, is significant for it marks a history of struggle, of nonparticipation in the Treaty principle and/or the bicultural discourse, by Tūhoe, who are known for its long history of resistance to colonization.... Today, Tūhoe have one of the highest ratios of native speakers of the Māori language (called "te reo") among tribal groups and have a strong cultural identity that is intimately linked to the land in an area that they call "Te Urewera." ... There are about 20,000 people who claim Tūhoe ancestry, many of whom are still living in relatively isolated communities within Te Urewera.²⁸

The caption emphasizes the notion of internal borders, a "checkpoint" within the nation, in Ruātoki to be precise, and articulates zones of inclusion and exclusion that demarcate between citizens in the nation, while the figure of the armed police (Cohen's "rule enforcer")²⁹ highlights the significance of the raid, and legitimizes the armed operations to entrench state sovereignty within Ruātoki.³⁰ The print and online media reports cited all reaffirm that the police intervention was against "Māori sovereignty activists" or "Māori separatists."³¹ For example, Reuters ends its report with the claim that Māori have a history of activism and "high-profile demonstrations and land occupations."³² However, unlike the sole focus on the image of Iti and Ruātoki under siege, the report mentions that, other than Māori, police also targeted "political and environmental activists,"³³ and "so-called peace groups."³⁴ The media choice of images, captioning, and framing "terror" through a specific individual, community, people, and history demonstrate that the Indigenous body is now substitutable with that of the terrorist.

Fast-forward to five years later: four individuals are charged with being part of an organized criminal group but the charge is dismissed and they are now awaiting sentencing on firearms

charges. These individuals are from various parts of New Zealand, there are both Māori and Pakeha (white New Zealanders) among the four. Not all of them are Tūhoe (one is a recent migrant) and not all of them come from Te Urewera or have genealogies linked to there. They are heterogeneous and different, yet mainstream media has unproblematically referred to them collectively, homogenously. Christchurch's *The Press*, for instance, refers to them as the "Urewera Four," as do the *New Zealand Herald*, the *Otago Daily Times*, and the *Dominion Post*, among others.³⁵ The substitution functions powerfully for it dismisses the individualities of each individual, suggesting a collective enterprise and, at the same time, connecting them to a specific place with a history of resistance and struggle. The court proceedings are framed under the heading "Urewera trial" (*Stuff News Portal*, *New Zealand Herald*, *Otago Daily Times*), the verdict as "The Urewera verdict" (*Listener*, *New Zealand Herald*), and the jury as the "Urewera jury" (*New Zealand Herald*, *Stuff News Portal*).³⁶ A similar pattern of framing appeared in the broadcast news and current affairs coverage. The mobilization of Te Urewera to mark the event invokes a specific place, its history, culture, peoples, and practices, to locate the 2007 "anti-terror" raids firmly in close proximity to Indigenous struggles and protests. Here "terror" is made intelligible through Te Urewera. Just as mainstream media did in 2007, this media practice of naming gives terror a countenance: an Indigenous countenance to be precise. The media practices five years after the raids, in that sense, continue the practices witnessed on October 15, 2007.³⁷

One way by which we might conceive of the visual regime of racial profiling, the linking of the discourse of terror with that of Indigenous sovereignty, is through the concept of media necropower. Drawing on Achille Mbembe's notion of necropower as the "contemporary forms of subjugation of life to the power of death,"³⁸ Osuri examines the interview with Mamdouh Habib, "an Australian citizen, who was arrested in Pakistan just after September 11, tortured in Egypt, and subsequently spent three years imprisoned and tortured in Guantanamo Bay," broadcast on *60 Minutes* (Australia).³⁹ Osuri argues that the structuring, captioning ("Under Suspicion"), and the framing of the interview, invites the viewer to "judge Habib as a possible terrorist despite Habib's recounting of his experiences of torture."⁴⁰ This is how the interview begins:

Everyone has an opinion. Either Mamdouh Habib is a dangerous terrorist who should have been left to rot in jail or he is an innocent man persecuted because he was in the wrong place at the wrong time. It's one or the other, simple as that, if you believe the propaganda. But so far, you've not seen this mysterious Mr Habib, never heard a single word from him.... For the first time, your chance to judge Mamdouh Habib for yourself.⁴¹

The framing immediately sets up Habib in a binary: he is either a “dangerous terrorist” or an “innocent man”; it dismisses his innocence as propaganda; and “no other alternatives are put forward anywhere in the program. In fact, since the term ‘dangerous terrorist’ is not accompanied by any analysis or discussion, *60 Minutes* condones the solution that dangerous terrorists should rot in jail presumably without a trial.”⁴² In other words, *60 Minutes* put Habib to death; it kills him off and positions him, unproblematically, as a dangerous terrorist. This is the operation of media necropower, that is “contemporary media practices which reconfigure the politics of race and assimilability by making racialised bodies culturally intelligible in the current context of the war against terrorism.”⁴³ The notion of killing or putting to death through media necropower is underpinned by Michel Foucault’s account of the sovereign right to kill. As he says, “when I say ‘killing’ I obviously do not mean simply murder as such, but also every form of indirect murder: the fact of exposing someone to death, increasing the risk of death for some people, or quite simply, political death, expulsion, rejection, and so on.”⁴⁴

In a similar vein, it can be argued that the media coverage of the “anti-terror” raids on October 15, 2007, and the subsequent media reporting underscore the workings of necropower in the national and international media that is connected to, and part of, a larger global media practice of covering “terror” post 9/11. The coverage of the events connects disparate discourses—terror(ism), Indigenous sovereignty, Tūhoe, Te Urewera—and rearticulates terror, which has no specific cultural, ethnic, or racial countenance, into a culturally intelligible idiom. The reporting is instructive in that it demonstrates how mainstream media participates in making terror intelligible. More importantly, it is instructive in that it demonstrates the media practice of cutting up the social, setting up lines of inclusion and exclusion. As Police Commissioner Howard Broad stated, the raids were “carried out in the interests of public safety,”⁴⁵ thus demarcating the social into a public at large, who are peaceful, law-abiding citizens of the nation, and those who are violent, law-breaking noncitizens, the alleged “terrorists.” The mobilization of public safety as the motive for the raids justifies the necropolitical operations of the state—the war within the nation and beyond. As Foucault aptly puts it, “wars are no longer waged in the name of the sovereign who must be defended: they are waged on behalf of the existence of everyone.”⁴⁶ And in this case, the notion of public safety becomes the justification for the violence that the state unleashes on Indigenous peoples whose lives are deemed unnecessary, not serving the common good, and who can therefore be killed so that others can live.

The examination of media reports about the “anti-terror” raids reveals that the media amplified and intensified the moral panic around terror in racialized terms: Māori “radicals” are constructed as the archetypical figures of terrorism. It also shows that the operation of the media solidifies and consolidates a system of visualizing terror as the Indigenous subjects are “put to

death,” in Foucault’s sense. Put in another way, the “killing” of Iti, Tūhoe resistance, Ruātoki, Te Urewera, and Māori sovereignty by the media, putting them to death in the public domain, is part of a serial killing strategy that the state has employed when it feels threatened by an internal “danger.”⁴⁷

Biopolitical Control

The media coverage that I have used to exemplify the mediation of terror, I wish to argue, is closely connected to the nation-state’s exercise of biopolitical control, the deployment of the technology of biopower that seeks to establish the stability of the social, to regularize and normalize the way in which the national social is imagined. According to Foucault, sovereign power operates through two technologies of power: disciplinary power, which emerged some time in the seventeenth century, and biopower, which emerged around the late eighteenth/early nineteenth centuries. Disciplinary power “centers on the body, produces individualizing effects, and manipulates the body as a source of forces that have to be rendered both useful and docile.”⁴⁸ Biopower, in contrast,

is centered not on the body but on life: a technology [of power] which brings together the mass effects characteristic of a population, which tries to control the series of random events that occur in a living mass.... This is a technology which aims to establish a sort of homeostasis, not by training individuals, but by achieving an overall equilibrium that protects the security of the whole from internal dangers.⁴⁹

The two technologies of power upon which state power relies to authorize its legitimacy mark the two rights of sovereignty: the first—“to take life or let live”⁵⁰—is constituted under the regime of disciplinary power, while the second—“to make live and to let die”⁵¹—is constituted under the regime of biopower.⁵²

Biopower concerns the strategic management of the population by “structur[ing] the possible field of action of others.”⁵³ It is, more crucially, a reconsideration of the constitution of sovereign power—because sovereign power recognizes that it is dealing with populations rather than individuals, it also recognizes that it cannot sustain its power by disciplining (to take life and let live). Instead, sovereign power maintains itself through the “power of regularization ... [of] making live and letting die.”⁵⁴ This is done by “using overall mechanisms and acting in such a way as to achieve overall states of equilibration or regularity; it is, in a word, a matter of taking control of life and the biological processes of man-as-species and of ensuring that they are not disciplined, but regularized.”⁵⁵ The regularization of life involves the use of multiple technologies of power that quantify, measure, objectify, and classify the forces of life in ways or

relations with the aim of maximizing its value as resource.⁵⁶ This new mode of government categorizes the forces of life and determines which lives live and die, which can be killed, and which should be fostered in the name of the well-being of the population.

Conceptualized as such, it can be argued that the media practices on and about the “anti-terror” raids in New Zealand participate in the consolidation of sovereign power. It is part of a larger assemblage of power that is engaged in the management and categorization of life in general, and Indigenous life more particularly, in the name of the well-being of the population. In other words, mainstream media is complicit for it is part of a larger system of calculating, classifying, and objectifying forms of life that ensures the optimization and regularization of a general state of life. As the media reports confirm, Māori are thus produced, calculated, classified, and “put to death” as an internal danger that threatens the “overall equilibrium that protects the security of the whole.”⁵⁷ The choice of Iti, who stands in for Indigenous communities and the demand for Indigenous sovereignty, and the framing of the raids through Ruātoki, Tūhoe, Te Urewera, casting these places, cultures, and communities as a “state of exception,” exemplify how the media participates in a project of giving terror an Indigenous countenance and simultaneously defines a segment of the population as a problem to the rest.⁵⁸ In short, the media normalizes the national social through the marginalization and classification of Indigenous peoples through the discourse of terror.

How might we conceptualize the media practices of exposing Iti, the residents of Ruātoki, Tūhoe, Te Urewera, and the demand for Indigenous sovereignty by rightful citizens of the nation to the risk of death? Put differently, under what conditions and on what grounds did the media expose its citizens, cultures, peoples, and places to the risk of being killed? The response to this, qua Foucault, is racism. As Foucault points out, the emergence of biopower legitimized the putting to death of enemies and citizens by inscribing racism “as the basic mechanism of the State ... [and] as a result the modern state can scarcely function without becoming involved with racism at some point, within certain limits and subject to certain conditions.”⁵⁹ Foucault is not suggesting that racism emerges at the moment when biopower underpins the power of sovereignty; rather, as he emphasizes, “racism has already been in existence for a very long time. But ... it functioned elsewhere,”⁶⁰ in that it was not inscribed as fundamental to the operations of the nation-state. The inscription of racism takes place when the state identifies the population as a political problem and uses racism as “a way of introducing a break into the domain of life that is under power’s control: the break between what must live and what must die.”⁶¹ Racism thus works to fragment the forces of life that power controls, “a way of separating out the groups that exist within a population.”⁶² The first function of racism is to fragment the biopolitical field. The media practices discussed herein operate similarly: the racialization of terror functions to fragment the biopolitical field to situate certain forms of

“being” Māori—the demand for Indigenous sovereignty, Ruātoki, Tūhoe, and Indigenous resistance—in the zone of exclusion.

The second function of racism “allows the establishment of a positive relation of this type: ‘the very fact that you let more die will allow you to live more’ ... ‘if you want to live, you must take lives, you must be able to kill.’”⁶³ The relationship is now based on species type, and so the more inferior, abnormal species are killed, “the fewer the degenerates there will be in the species as a whole.”⁶⁴ Racism thus justifies the killing of the other in the sense that the death of the other, “the bad ... inferior race ... is something that will make life in general healthier: healthier and purer.”⁶⁵ We can see how the second function underpins the necropolitical media practices in that the racialization of terror—the racism of terror—provides the preconditions for exercising sovereign power—the right to life and death. In this context then, the media reporting is more about managing Indigenous life, Indigenous sovereignty, as a threat that must be violently dealt with in order to secure the well-being or security of the rest of the population. Let us recollect that it was precisely in the name of the population and of making it safe and secure that the police commissioner legitimized the raids.⁶⁶

Biopolitical Challenges

Let me turn to a brief discussion of counter-responses to the mainstream media coverage: commentaries on blogs, online communities such as “October 15 Solidarity” and “Beyond Resistance,” which have set up dedicated websites and social media outlets, and documentaries that circulate in the media-world are critical of the “anti-terror” raids and the prosecution.⁶⁷ These counter-voices are part of an alternative media circuit that produces a genealogy of the “anti-terror” raids that problematizes the constitution of “terror,” emphasizes the violence of state power through its repressive and ideological state apparatuses, and exposes the fallacy of democracy and the closing down of resistance in New Zealand.⁶⁸ They exemplify a biopolitical challenge, that is, a politics that opposes state power as well as mainstream media power to constitute terror. They are also participating in the production of an alternative to, and a confrontation with, the normalized articulation of terror, Indigenous sovereignty, and state power.

One such alternative media instance is the documentary *Operation 8: Deep in the Forest* (2011), whose main title is the police codename for the 2007 “anti-terror” raids, which provides a critical visualization of the “anti-terror” raids that radically reconceives terror as state terror. In his review of the film in *Crop*, Kevin Fisher suggests that the strength of the film lies precisely in its strategy of

Utiliz[ing] very little in the way of voice-over narration, but rather through careful editing, compos[ing] an intricate mosaic of different media sources into a multi-layered dialogue among defendants, representatives of the Tūhoe people, police, ex-police, political activists, politicians, attorneys, intelligence experts and academics, that seems to revive the events surrounding Operation 8 on screen.⁶⁹

This “intricate mosaic” that Fisher refers to is the way the film, on the one hand, links the “anti-terror” raids to the global war on terror, to a longer history of Indigenous activism, the repression of political activisms, the culture of surveillance, and police violence. On the other hand, the film’s mosaic includes detailed impact statements from victims who recount the events of the day, and “the very real costs of those investigations to the lives of the defendants, as well as to legal principles concerning search and seizure and fair judicial process.”⁷⁰ The film opens with recountings by those who were raided, arrested, photographed, searched, scrutinized, criminalized, and terrorized by the nationwide “anti-terror” raids on October 15, 2007. The voice of twelve-year-old Patricia Lambert recounting the police raids, the fear that gripped her and the violent police practices and interrogation, accompanied by a helicopter-shot of Te Urewera, ushers us into the world of those central to the raids but whose voices were never part of mainstream media coverage. Here, we are privy to the numerous voices, everyday people who are victims of state brutality, and another narrative of the “anti-terror” raids.

The recounting is powerful as it provides a radically different narrative of the “anti-terror” raids, emphasizing the violence of the police (in one scene, defendant Tūhoe Lambert tells us that his granddaughter was led out of the house with “a gun to her head”) and challenging police claims (in another scene, Maraki Teepa informs us that his *whānau* are possum and pig hunters and as such “everyone has a 303 rifle.” Guns, he insists, are not for terror activities but for sourcing food). Toward the closing of the film we come across a shed, possibly the shed the defendants had been locked up in: it is reinscribed with the powerful sentiment of a five-year-old (see Figure 1.3). This is telling for it reconfigures, recodes what took place on that day. What took place, according to the mainstream media, was a police operation against “terrorists” in the country; what took place, according to the five-year-old, a firsthand witness, was a frightful episode that left the child hungry, scared, and in tears. The “anti-terror” raids for the child were an emotive, affective, experience and the sentiment expressed in writing provides us with another way of thinking about the “anti-terror” raids. The recounting is powerful insofar as it functions to produce an alternative conception of terror and thus problematizes the mainstream media framing of terror.



Figure 1.3.

[Open in new tab](#)[Download slide](#)

Graffiti on shed marking the first anniversary of the raids, October 15, 2008, Ruātoki. Still by Errol Wright from *Operation 8* (Wellington: CUTCUTCUT Films, 2011).

Reproduced with permission of Errol Wright and Abi King-Jones.

The film also engenders an alternative national social fostered through the linking of various voices to forge a community of people with multiple (activist) orientations, built around numerous issues—environment, antiwar, peace, Indigenous sovereignty, justice, land rights, Tūhoe—and from various social backgrounds committed to offering an alternative to the paradigm of power. The scene of protest that the film captures in Figure 1.4 is a visual instantiation of such a community and the call for an alternative vision of New Zealand.



Figure 1.4.

[Open in new tab](#)[Download slide](#)

“March for Freedom” to Auckland Central Remand Prison, October 27, 2007. Still by Tia Taurere from *Operation 8* (Wellington: CUTCUTCUT Films, 2011).

Reproduced with permission of Errol Wright and Abi King-Jones.

What this scene captures and what the film as whole seeks to do is launch a biopolitical challenge to the visual regime of profiling terror in mainstream media, offering an alternative articulation of terror and, most crucially, imagining another vision of the national social. In that regard it seeks to voice the urgency of social emancipation and struggle against sovereign power. It is, to use the words of Michael Hardt and Antonio Negri, articulating the “making of the multitude,” that is, the power of life to produce an alternative national social.⁷¹ In *Commonwealth*, Hardt and Negri suggest that it would be remiss for us to think that Foucault’s “analyses of biopower are aimed ... at an empirical description of how power works for and through subjects.”⁷² This is because Foucault does analyze the “potential for the production of alternatively different forms of power. This point [they continue] is implicit in Foucault’s claim that freedom and resistance are necessary conditions for the exercise of power.”⁷³ Hardt and Negri are suggesting that while power does seek to classify and regulate

life in the name of an overall equilibrium, it cannot fully contain life or, more precisely, the power of life. Life, thus, is always already invested with biopolitical potentiality, that is, with the power to create new subjectivities and innovative forms of sociality. *Operation 8*, I wish to suggest, does this: it seeks to make the multitude and “allows us to recognize how its productive activity is also a political act of self-making.”⁷⁴ It shores up the biopolitical force of the power of life, the capacity to self-make, by suturing the voice of the innumerable individuals, collectivities, and communities impacted by the “antiterror” raids with the scenes of protest marches and meetings, alongside the surveillance of the police and undercover agents by those accused. In that regard, the complex map that the film articulates can be grasped as a biopolitical production that “intervene[s] in the circuits of the production of subjectivity, flee[s] from the apparatuses of control, and construct[s] the basis for an autonomous production” of an alternative national social that refuses to link terror with Indigenous lives.⁷⁵

Conclusion

The events that manifested on October 15, 2007, in Aotearoa—the anti-terror raids, the differentiated policing techniques, and the media coverage—demonstrate that what took place on that day was not an exception; the racialized visualization and policing of terror perpetuates a much longer history of exploitation and oppression of the Indigenous community in this country. Reading the media practice as media necropower at work, and the arrests in terms of biopower and the power of sovereignty, I have sought to demonstrate that the media practices and arrests animate a specific sovereign function whose precondition is racism. The production of a racialized moral panic of terror needs to be conceptualized as a key sovereign investment in the management of life, or more precisely the management of Indigenous life in the name of the well-being of the population. And this investment ensures the continuation of a racialized state sovereignty.

The operations of the mainstream media around the “anti-terror” raids tell a particular tale: for an officially self-declared bicultural, postcolonial nation that champions its race relations as exemplary, the media circuit’s perpetuation of a Manichean view of terror clearly demonstrates that New Zealand has not dismantled left-over colonial “processes of subject and identity formation.”⁷⁶ In short, it is not quite postcolonial. The circulation of other media constructions of the event such as *Operation 8* do, however, point to the potential for an alternative media to engender a truly postcolonial social reality in which Indigenous claims for sovereignty, particularly, are recognized as autonomous.

Notes

1.

G. Cumming et al., "Urewera Verdict: Freedom, for Now," *New Zealand Herald*, March 21, 2012, http://www.nzherald.co.nz/nz/news/article.cfm?c_id=1&objectid=10793480.

Tame Iti, it should be emphasized, is a complex figure: he is a Tūhoe activist who has been the face of "terror" in New Zealand, post-October 15, 2007. He is, however, not just that, as detailed in note 5 below.

2.

This is a condensed, updated, and expanded version of a paper previously published "15 October 2007, Aotearoa: Race, Terror and Sovereignty," in *Sites: A Journal of Social Anthropology & Cultural Studies* 5, no. 1 (2008): 124–51

;51. In the previous article I examined mainstream media and police practices on the day of the raids and in that regard it was a snapshot of the event. The raids' ongoing consequences continue to haunt the national imagination. The discussions from the previous article have been significantly rewritten to ensure that it connects with the argument of this chapter and the focus of this book.

3.

The key elements of the Terrorism Suppression Act include the following: "the law makes it a criminal offence to take part in, finance or recruit for a terrorist organisation or terrorist act; planning a terrorist act, or making a 'credible threat', is also illegal even if it is not carried out; unlike other countries the law does not give police additional powers of arrest or detainment; the Attorney-General must give the green light to any prosecutions under the Act, but Michael Cullen has delegated this responsibility to Solicitor-General David Collins; under the Act groups can be listed as a designated terrorist entity, but so far no local groups have been designated. Those that have been listed are United Nations designated groups." Cited from

New Zealand Herald, "Exclusive: Hunters Alerted Police to Alleged Terror Camps," October 15,

2007, http://www.nzherald.co.nz/nz/news/article.cfm?c_id=1&objectid=10469938.

4.

D.

Cheng, "Terrorism Act 'Unworkable,'" *New Zealand Herald*, November 9,

2007, http://www.nzherald.co.nz/nz/news/article.cfm?c_id=1&objectid=10474950.

5.

The basis for the selection of media outlets requires clarification: I have selected the following examples to shore up the point that the media participates in the production of a moral panic around terrorism that is highly racialized. At the same time, there was

media coverage of the issue that did not set up the event in racialized terms. For instance, a

Sunday Star Times report of October 21, 2007

, gave considerable attention to comments by Iti's son, Toi, who "told National Radio last week his father was 'just a 55-year-old man with diabetes' who would never dream of 'blowing up innocent children at shopping malls it's not his style.'" Other comments on Iti included the following: "Iti co-hosts a boys' agony programme for emotionally distraught brothers once a week on Māori TV and then hangs about in Ponsonby cafes. He wears camouflage gear, but doesn't have the body type for special ops," from *Sunday Star Times* columnist and Canterbury University academic Rawiri Taonui. Iti's partner, Maria Steens, a social worker, "scoffs at the suggestion her partner of 10 years is a terrorist. 'I wouldn't hang out with a man who's a terrorist. If those allegations are true, I don't know when he fits it all in,' she said. Asked why Iti would be associating with environmental activists, she said: 'I guess he's as passionate as the rest of us in terms of environmental issues. Tame's friends are so broad he doesn't just hang out with Māori activists, he hangs out with all sorts of people, Māori and Pakeha.'" Numerous other friends were quoted as saying that Iti is harmless, a joke(r), or an actor, an image that has been in circulation at least since his contribution to the Parihaka exhibition at the Wellington City Gallery. This is just one example of the several ways in which the local media seemed concerned with defusing the situation, and with staging Iti as just another ordinary person, a citizen of this country, with strong convictions on issues such as environmentalism and Indigenous rights. Therefore it must be said that the coverage of the event in the media did attempt to inflect another image of Iti that differs radically from the staging of Iti in highly racialized and reductive terms as the face of terror. It is the circulation of the latter image that concerns this chapter. It must also be said that the nonracialized coverage that circulated could be seen as efforts to mask the racialized processes themselves. The full *Sunday Star Times* coverage, "Tame Iti," is available at

<http://www.stuff.co.nz/sunday-star-times/features/profiles/28535>.

6.

Douglas Kellner, "9/11, Spectacles of Terror, and Media Manipulation: A Critique of Jihadist and Bush Media Politics," *Critical Discourse Studies* 1, no. 1 (2004): 44.

7.

Joseph Pugliese, "The Locus of the Non: The Racial Fault-Line of 'of Middle-Eastern Appearance,'" *borderlands e-journal* 2, no. 3,

(2003), http://www.borderlands.net.au/vol2no3_2003/pugliese_non.htm

; and

Goldie Osuri, "Media Necropower: Australian Media Reception and the Somatechnics of Mamdouh Habib," *borderlands e-journal* 5, no. 1

(2006), http://www.borderlands.net.au/vol5no1_2006/osuri_necropower.htm.

8.

Edward Said, *Covering Islam: How the Media and the Experts Determine How We See the Rest of the World* (New York: Pantheon, 1981).

9.

Richard Boast, *Buying the Land, Selling the Land: Governments and Māori Land in the North Island 1865–1921* (Wellington: Victoria University Press, 2008), 202.

10.

Mark Kelly, "Racism, Nationalism and Biopolitics: Foucault's Society Must Be Defended," *Contretemps* 4 (2004): 60–61.

11.

The full

BBC report, "NZ Police Hold 17 in Terror Raids," 2007, is available

at <http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/asia-pacific/7044448.stm>.

12.

See the *New Zealand Herald's* "Exclusive" for the full report.

13.

The report at

"Anti-Terror Raids in New Zealand," *The Age*, 2007, is available

at <http://www.theage.com.au/news/world/antiterror-raids-in-new-zealand/2007/10/15/1192300647235.html&h=409&w=300&sz=38&hl=en&start=1&um=1&tbnid=T-4XV5TRKlzl5M:&tbnh=125&tbnw=92&prev=/images?q=anti-terror+raids+NZ&um=1&hl=en&client=safari%2>.

14.

The Reuters report,

"New Zealand Police Swoop on Weapon Training Camps," 2007, is available

at <http://www.reuters.com/article/2007/10/15/idUSWEL207669>.

15.

The report in *The Australian* is available at

"Activists Arrested in NZ Terror Raids,"

2007, <http://www.theaustralian.com.au/news/activists-arrested-in-nz-terror-raids/story-e6frg6sx-1111114646855>

while the Bloomberg report by

E. O'Brien, "New Zealand Anti-Terror Police Seize Weapons in Raid," 2007, is available

at <http://www.bloomberg.com/apps/news?pid=newsarchive&sid=aBCKchaL958M&refer=australia>.

16.

The report in the *New Zealand Herald* is available at http://www.nzherald.co.nz/nz/news/article.cfm?c_id=1&objectid=10470116.

17.

Sue Abel, "Tūhoe and 'Terrorism' on Television News," in *Terror in Our Midst?: Searching for Terrorism in Aotearoa New Zealand*, ed. Danny Keenan (Wellington: Huia Publishers, 2008), 115.

18.

Ibid.

, 116.

19.

Stuart Hall et al., *Policing the Crisis: Mugging, the State and Law and Order* (London: Macmillan Education, 1978), 17.

20.

Ibid.

, 29.

21.

Stanley Cohen, *Folk Devils and Moral Panics: The Creation of the Mods and Rockers* (London: MacGibbon and Kee, 1972).

22.

See, for instance, the conversation cited below between key Māori political figures as reported on Australian Broadcasting Corporation news, which further amplifies the racialized production of moral panic. On the one hand, Pita Sharples, coleader of the Māori Party claims, rightfully, that the terror raids were racialized; while on the other, both Parekura Horomia, then Minister for Māori Affairs in the Labour Party-led coalition government, and Ron Mark, the New Zealand First Party's law and order spokesperson, deny this, and in fact claim that the racialization of the raids by Sharples was an attempt to politicize the issue instead of focusing on the raids as a measure of security. The simultaneous denial and charge (of trying to politicize the event) does not erase the racial trope; rather, it affirms it by its denial and reconstitution (as politicization) precisely because now the "anti-terror" raids are equated as a politicization and racialization of security. In effect, then, the discourse of the raids is always already racialized. Here is the conversation reported in full: "Māori Party leader Pita Sharples says it is a sad throwback to the darkest days in the country when colonial troopers stormed into Māori villages. 'It's saying there are terrorists in our country, and the terrorists are Māori-centred,' he said. 'There's that and it's the way the raids were carried out, paramilitary style, in front of children and so on just with big guns. That's what I meant by taking us back a century.' But Māori Affairs Minister Parekura Horomia says it is a homeland security, not a race issue, and that the Māori Party is rushing to judgment before all the facts are disclosed. 'This is not an exercise to play the race card in, as much as some journos and some community sectors will

perceive it as such, and play it,' he said. 'Let's be frank about it. There have been tensions over the years. [But] by crikey, our race relations are as good as anybody's in the world, if not better.' The New Zealand First Party's law and order spokesman, Ron Mark, says the Māori Party is attempting to politicise the police response to a legitimate security threat. 'If the police were in possession of some of the intelligence that we believe that they have, and they did nothing, and something happened, what would people be saying now?' he asked. 'This is not about race. The people that have been arrested, charged and investigated are not all Māori. To suggest that it's racist is foolishness, and if I could be polite, it is mischievous.'"

P. Lewis, "NZ Police under Fire over 'Racist' Raids," *ABC*,

2007, <http://www.abc.net.au/news/2007-10-19/nz-police-under-fire-over-racist-raids/703668>.

23.

See

BBC News report, "NZ Police Hold 17 in Terror Raids."

24.

New Zealand Herald, "Exclusive."

25.

The Age, "Anti-Terror Raids in New Zealand."

26.

It should be noted that the National Party-led coalition government recently denied *kaitiakitanga* (exercise of guardianship) for Tūhoe over Te Urewera. This marks the nonrecognition of Te Urewera as the spiritual center of Tūhoe, and thus it remains a space of contested epistemological value. The naming of the "Urewera Four," and the mobilization of "Urewera" more generally in the coverage of the trial mark the significance of this historically contested site.

27.

Here is an excerpt of Morse's firsthand account of her arrest and her comparison of this with the policing techniques in Ruātoki and South Auckland: "The raids were staged on a Monday morning starting at approximately 5 am. At 5:45 am, the Police knocked on my door. Then they nearly broke it down. When I opened it, 15 officers swarmed in, waving an 80-page search warrant in my face. When I said, 'this isn't signed,' the detective responded 'here, here's the signed copy.' Then they ransacked my room, pulling my plants out of their containers, removing the back of my refrigerator and collecting a raft of documents, photographs, electronic gear and clothing. Finally, they arrested me and told me that I was going to be charged with participating in a terrorist group.... Of the 17 arrested ... 12 were Māori, many from the Tūhoe iwi (tribe).... In a spectacular display of force, armed, balaclava-clad police known as the 'armed offenders squad' quite literally invaded the small Tūhoe town of Ruātoki and blockaded the entire community. On an elaborate quest for terrorists and evidence, they stopped

all vehicles coming in or out of the community and photographed the drivers and occupants. In the process of conducting house raids, they severely traumatized many people, including locking a woman and five children in a shed for six hours while the man of the family was questioned, taking a woman's underwear as evidence, and boarding a local school bus. In one South Auckland raid, the police held an entire family, including a 12-year-old girl, on their knees with hands behind their heads for some 5 hours, asking the young woman if she was a terrorist. This was the pattern for raids in the Māori communities. For the non-indigenous arrestees ... the situation was starkly different. In my case, I was not even handcuffed as I was walked to the car. No white neighborhoods were blockaded, nor were white bystanders stopped and photographed as they went about their daily business that cool Monday morning in October." See

Valerie Morse, "Land of the Long White Lie: The New Zealand Terror Raids," *Counterpunch*, February 19, 2008, <http://www.counterpunch.org/2008/02/19/the-new-zealand-terror-raids/>.

28.

Ibid.

29.

Cohen, *Folk Devils and Moral Panics*.

30.

The armed police are a specialist wing of the police force called upon in times of extremity.

31.

"Activists Arrested in NZ Terror Raids," *The Australian*

;

O'Brien, "New Zealand Anti-Terror Police Seize Weapons in Raid."

32.

"New Zealand Police Swoop on Weapon Training Camps."

33.

See

BBC report "NZ Police Hold 17 in Terror Raids"; *New Zealand Herald*, "Exclusive."

34.

O'Brien, "New Zealand Anti-Terror Police Seize Weapons in Raid."

35.

On the use of the headline "Urewera Four," see

"Urewera Four 'Training to Kill,'" *The Press*, February 15, 2012, A5

;

“Urewera Four: Iti Suspects Surveillance,” *New Zealand Herald*, May 9,

2012, http://www.nzherald.co.nz/nz/news/article.cfm?c_id=1&objectid=10804494

;

“‘Urewera Four’: Crown Considers Retrial,” *Otago Daily Times*, March 20,

2012, <http://www.odt.co.nz/news/national/202153/urewera-four-crown-considers-retrial>

;

“No Retrial for Urewera Four,” *Dominion Post*, May 9,

2012, <http://www.stuff.co.nz/dominion-post/news/6886800/No-retrial-of-Urewera-Four>.

36.

On the use of the headline “Urewera Trial,” see

“Juror’s Injury Delays Urewera Trial,” *Stuff News Portal*, March 16,

2012, <http://www.stuff.co.nz/national/6586050/Jurors-injury-delays-Urewera-trial>

;

“Urewera Trial: Juror Hospitalised,” *New Zealand Herald*, March 16,

2012, http://www.nzherald.co.nz/nz/news/article.cfm?c_id=1&objectid=10792471

; and

“Urewera Trial Bill Nears \$3.9m,” *Otago Daily Times*, April 30,

2012, <http://www.odt.co.nz/news/national/207341/urewera-trial-bill-nears-39m>.

On the headline “Urewera Verdict,” see

T. Manhire, “The Urewera Verdict: What the Bloggers Are Saying,” *New Zealand Listener*, March 21, 2012, [http://www.listener.co.nz/commentary/the-internaut/the-](http://www.listener.co.nz/commentary/the-internaut/the-urewera-verdict-what-the-bloggers-are-saying/)

[urewera-verdict-what-the-bloggers-are-saying/](http://www.listener.co.nz/commentary/the-internaut/the-urewera-verdict-what-the-bloggers-are-saying/)

; and

“Urewera Verdict: Crown Mulls Retrial,” *New Zealand Herald*, March 20,

2012, http://www.nzherald.co.nz/nz/news/article.cfm?c_id=1&objectid=10793370.

On the headline “Urewera Jury,” see

“Urewera Jury Having ‘Some Difficulty,’” *New Zealand Herald*, March 19,

2012, http://www.nzherald.co.nz/nz/news/article.cfm?c_id=1&objectid=10793130

; and

“Urewera Jury Returns Decisions,” *Stuff News Portal*, March 20,

2012, <http://www.stuff.co.nz/national/crime/6606576/Urewera-jury-return-decisions>.

37.

While there have been extensive debates across the media spectrum that have challenged, questioned, scrutinized, and articulated a much more robust, problematic

conception of “terror,” the raids, and the state actions, I have focused on coverage that has perpetuated a reductive articulation of “terror” that connects it to Indigenous communities and the demand for sovereignty to make the point that conceptions of Indigenous lives in mainstream media remain highly problematic.

[38.](#)

Achille Mbembe, “Necropolitics,” translated by Libby Meintjes, *Public Culture* 15, no. 1 (2003): 39.

As Mbembe writes, “this essay assumes that the ultimate expression of sovereignty resides, to a large degree, in the power and the capacity to dictate who may live and who must die. Hence, to kill or to allow to live constitute the limits of sovereignty, its fundamental attributes. To exercise sovereignty is to exercise control over mortality and to define life as the deployment and manifestation of power. One could summarize in the above terms what Michel Foucault meant by biopower: that domain of life over which power has taken control. But under what practical conditions is the right to kill, to allow to live, or to expose to death exercised? Who is the subject of this right? What does the implementation of such a right tell us about the person who is thus put to death and about the relation of enmity that sets that person against his or her murderer? Is the notion of biopower sufficient to account for the contemporary ways in which the political, under the guise of war, of resistance, or of the fight against terror, makes the murder of the enemy its primary and absolute objective? War, after all, is as much a means of achieving sovereignty as a way of exercising the right to kill. Imagining politics as a form of war, we must ask: What place is given to life, death, and the human body (in particular the wounded or slain body)? How are they inscribed in the order of power?” (

[ibid.](#)

, 11–12).

[39.](#)

Osuri, “Media Necropower.”

[40.](#)

[Ibid.](#)

, para. 14.

[41.](#)

[Ibid.](#)

, para. 12.

[42.](#)

[Ibid.](#)

, para. 13.

[43.](#)

[Ibid.](#)

, para. 1.

[44.](#)

Michel Foucault, *Society Must Be Defended: Lectures at the College de France 1975–1976* (New York: Picador, 1997), 256.

[45.](#)

New Zealand Herald, “Exclusive.”

[46.](#)

Foucault, *Society Must Be Defended*, 137.

[47.](#)

In her book

Against Freedom, Valerie Morse

traces the response of the New Zealand government to the war on terror and locates this within a larger historical narrative. As she remarks, “colonization, systematic discrimination against Māori, racist immigration policies, support for the UK, then US wars, worker oppression, crumbs given to the masses, the illusion of democracy and media complicity, are all part of the history of this war. Like the US, the war on terrorism is nothing new in New Zealand; rather, it is the continuation of the same exploitation practiced by those in power for more than 165 years.”

Valerie Morse, *Against Freedom: The War on Terrorism in Everyday New Zealand Life* (Wellington: Rebel Press, 2007), 7.

[48.](#)

Foucault, *Society Must Be Defended*, 249.

[49.](#)

Foucault characterizes the shift in the operations of political power as a shift from anatomopolitics to biopolitics (

[ibid.](#)

, 243).

[50.](#)

[Ibid.](#)

, 241.

[51.](#)

[Ibid.](#)

[52.](#)

Disciplinary power “tries to rule a multiplicity of men to the extent that their multiplicity can and must be dissolved into individual bodies that can be kept under surveillance, trained, used, and if need be, punished” (

[ibid.](#)

, 242). In that sense sovereignty is underpinned with taking life or letting live. Biopower, in contrast, “is not applied to man-as-body [a feature of the disciplinary regime] but to the living man, to man-as-living being, ultimately ... to man-as-species” (

[ibid.](#)

). Here, biopower does not seek to individualize; rather this technology of power massifies, begins to “deal ... with the population, with the population as political

problem, as a problem that is at once scientific and political, as a biological problem and as power's problem" (

[ibid.](#)

, 245).

[53.](#)

Government, as Foucault understands it, refers to "the way in which the conduct of individuals or of groups might be directed.... To govern, in this sense, is to structure the possible field of action of others."

Michel Foucault, *Essential Works*, vol. 3: *Power*, trans. Robert Hurley et al. (New York: New Press, 2000), 341.

[54.](#)

[Ibid.](#)

[55.](#)

Foucault, *Society Must Be Defended*, 246–47.

[56.](#)

Sovereign power now works "to incite, reinforce, control, monitor, optimize, and organize the forces under it; a power bent on generating forces, making them grow, and ordering them."

Michel Foucault, *The History of Sexuality*, vol. 1, trans. Robert Hurley (New York: Pantheon Books, 1978), 136.

[57.](#)

Foucault, *Society Must Be Defended*, 249.

[58.](#)

Giorgio Agamben, in *State of Exception*, trans. Kevin Attell (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2005)

, traces the concept of state of exception and its relationship to sovereignty, and suggests that the state of exception is "the dominant paradigm of government in contemporary politics" (2). Drawing on the immediacy of the global war on terror, Agamben argues that "the transformation of a provisional and exceptional measure [the creation of a state of emergency or exception] into a technique of government threatens radically to alter ... the structure and meaning of the traditional distinction between constitutional forms [democracy and absolutism]" (2). In other words, the state of exception has become a permanent feature of democratic societies, and has been most recently mobilized in the war on terror rhetoric, specifically the USA Patriot Act, "which authorized the 'indefinite detention' and trial by 'military commissions' ... of noncitizens suspected of involvement in terrorist activities" (3). The creation of a permanent state of exception signals not the rule of a specific law, or "a special kind of law (like the law of war); rather, ... it is a suspension of the juridical order itself" (3, 4). The suspension of the juridical order does not then mean that the sovereignty of the nation-state, built upon a set of juridical orders and structures, is under threat. Rather, it consolidates and ensures the survival of the nation-state's sovereignty

precisely because the state of exception opens the possibility for the production and institution of lawpreserving, sovereignty-affirming, measures that are outside the sphere of law. That is to say, the state of exception—"a space devoid of law, a zone of anomies, in which all legal determinants ... are deactivated" (50)—produces the very conditions for the use of extralegal measures to ensure the survival of the sovereignty of the nation-state. This is precisely how and when "the juridicopolitical system transforms itself into a "killing machine" (86), where questions of citizenship and individual rights can be diminished, superseded, and rejected in the process of claiming this extension of power by a government. The state of exception thus provides the very conditions for the brutalization of individual and collective rights and liberty.

[59.](#)

Foucault, *Society Must Be Defended*, 249.

[60.](#)

[Ibid.](#)

[61.](#)

[Ibid.](#)

[62.](#)

[Ibid.](#)

, 255.

[63.](#)

[Ibid.](#)

[64.](#)

[Ibid.](#)

[65.](#)

[Ibid.](#)

[66.](#)

Let me add that while I have been discussing racism as the precondition for state sovereignty with reference to how the Māori community, particularly those demanding Indigenous sovereignty, have been arrested and represented through Foucault's notion of biopower, it does not follow that racism can be simply conceived in cultural or ethnic terms, although this is done in the media practices. Such a view cannot explain why the state targeted political activists, anarchists, and environmentalists whether they were Māori or not. In other words, their cultural location had no bearing on the state's decision. These collectivities were nevertheless arrested, exposed to the sovereign right to live and to kill, because of the racism of the state. And here racism must be grasped "as a way of introducing a break into the domain of life that is under power's control" (

Foucault, *Society Must Be Defended*, 254

). The anarchist, political activists, and environmentalists were those figures that were engineered as interrupting the domain of life (and state sovereignty) and hence had to be arrested to make the rest of the population safe and secure.

[67.](#)

For further information on the “15 October Solidarity” and “Beyond Resistance” collectives, see

<http://october15thsolidarity.info/>

and

<http://beyondresistance.wordpress.com>

, respectively.

[68.](#)

I use the term “alternative media,” following Nick Couldry and James Curran, to encompass both “media production that challenges, at least implicitly, actual concentrations of media power, whatever form those concentrations may take in different locations” and media forms that contest and challenge “established power blocs with a view to wider social emancipation.”

Errol Wright and Abi King-James (dirs.), *Operation 8: Deep in the Forest* (Wellington: CUTCUTCUT Films, 2011).

See

Nick Couldry and James Curran, “The Paradox of Media Power,” in *Contesting Media Power: Alternative Media in a Networked World*, ed. Nick Couldry and James Curran (Oxford: Rowman and Littlefield, 2003), 7.

[69.](#)

Kevin Fisher, “Operation 8: State of Exception,” *Crop* 2 (June-July 2011): 30.

[70.](#)

[Ibid.](#)

, 31.

[71.](#)

Michael Hardt and Antonio Negri, *Commonwealth* (Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, 2009), 173.

[72.](#)

[Ibid.](#)

, 59.

[73.](#)

[Ibid.](#)

[74.](#)

[Ibid.](#)

, 175.

[75.](#)

[Ibid.](#)

, 172.

[76.](#)

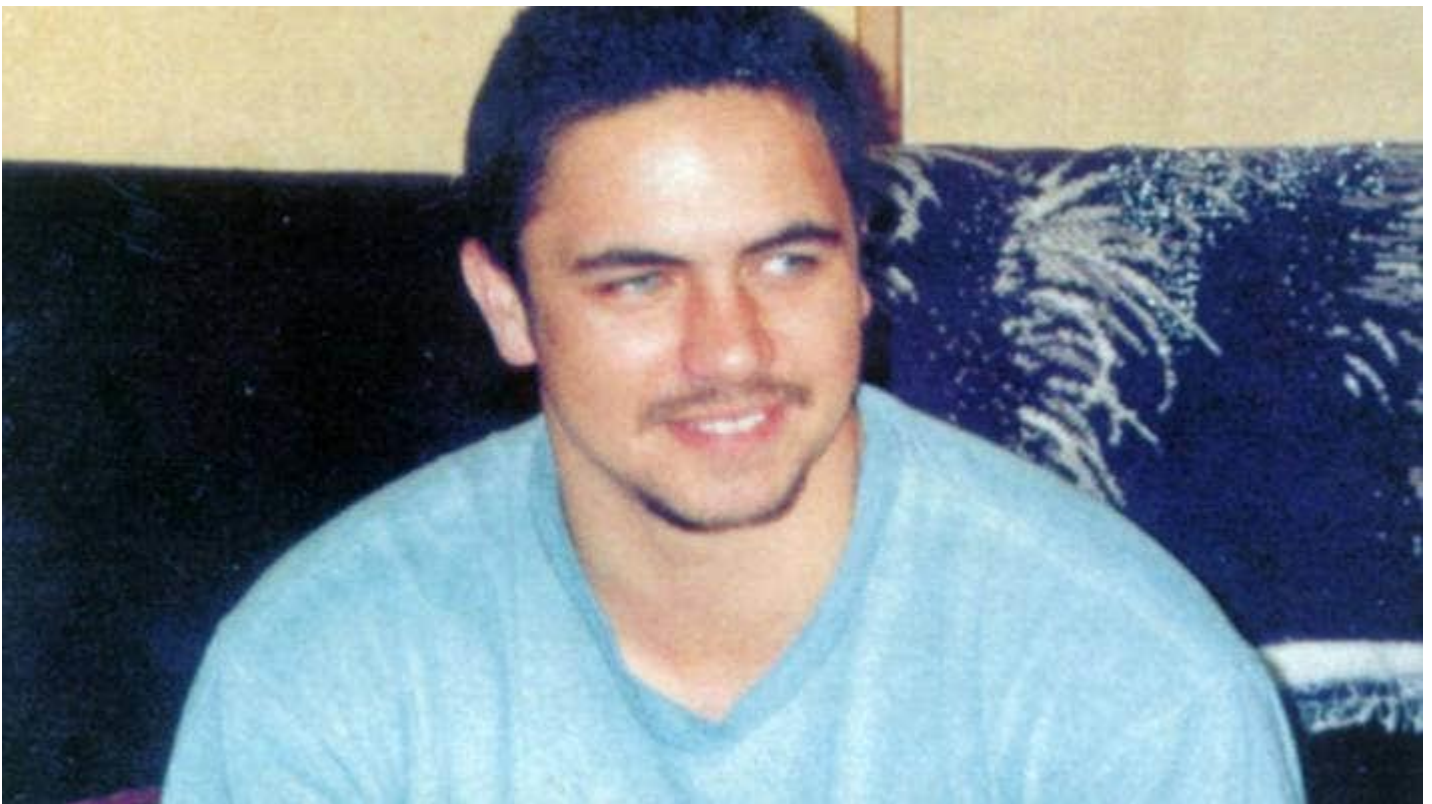
Ali Rattansi, "Postcolonialism and Its Discontents," *Economy and Society* 26, no. 4 (1997): 482.

When the police fail us, but nothing happens

COMMENT: The judge criticised the non performance of duties by Government, but with NO repercussions for anyone who acted or failed to act, to commit the breaches of rights. In essence, a hint of an apology, with no substance in the present and no positive influence for the future. Effectively, blame thrown at individuals and no blame put onto Government systems. This cries out for redress and trying to make the system work better in the future. Although british style judges proclaim their independence from Government, their actions show independence far, far less than their words.

John Bishop10:57, Aug 13 2021

<https://www.stuff.co.nz/national/politics/opinion/126049241/when-the-police-fail-us-but-nothing-happens>



SUPPLIED

A judge has found there had been a breach of the Crown's obligation to "conduct a rights-compliant inquiry into the killing of Steven Wallace,."

OPINION: A high court judge has found the Crown [breached the rights of the Wallace family](#), whose son, Steven, was shot by police on the streets of Waitara in 2000.

Wallace was on a rampage with a baseball bat, breaking windows and causing damage, and he was verbally threatening police officers called to the scene.

Initially they backed off but returned armed and Wallace was later shot and killed. The initial police investigation cleared the officers involved of wrongdoing.

A review by other officers agreed. So did the report of the Police Complaints Authority, and later [an investigation by the Independent Police Conduct Authority](#).

READ MORE:

- * [Investigation of Steven Wallace's shooting in Waitara not 'rights compliant'](#)
- * [Judge ponders legal and factual issues from Waitara police shooting](#)
- * [Legal first in right to life claim for Steven Wallace shooting](#)
- * [In full: Prime Minister Jacinda Ardern's Erebus apology](#)

[The family took a private prosecution](#) for murder against the officer who shot Steven. He was acquitted after a jury trial.

Earlier this year there was a lengthy hearing on the family's claim that the Crown had breached Wallace's human rights by failing to conduct a proper investigation. The judge found in their favour.

Justice Ellis writes that, under the Bill of Rights Act 1990, "a rights-compliant investigation must be independent, effective, conducted in public and accountable. It must afford an opportunity for Steven's family to be appropriately involved."

The judge concludes, "Notwithstanding the number of investigations since 2000 into the circumstances surrounding Steven's death, there has been a breach of the Crown's procedural section 8 obligation to conduct a rights-compliant inquiry into his killing." She doesn't award damages but the declaration that the Crown didn't fulfil its obligations is telling.

On at least three other occasions I consider the police have failed to act in the public interest.

In the Arthur Allan Thomas case, the discovery of a cartridge case from Thomas' rifle in the garden outside the window from where Jeanette and Harvey Crewe were shot was central to Thomas' conviction for murder.



JARRED WILLIAMSON/STUFF

John Bishop says there are multiple occasions in which he considers the police to have failed to act in the public interest.

[A Royal Commission into the Thomas case found that the cartridge case had been planted](#) on the orders of the head of the murder inquiry, Chief Inspector Bruce Hutton. Thomas was pardoned but neither Hutton nor the constable who planted the case were ever investigated or prosecuted.

In the royal commission of inquiry into the Air New Zealand DC-10 crash on Mt Erebus in November 1979, in which 257 people were killed, Justice Mahon said witnesses from Air New Zealand told him “an orchestrated litany of lies”.

Mahon's findings were overruled on procedural grounds in the Court of Appeal, but the claim that witnesses lied under oath was not questioned.

The police did not make any further inquiries into possible charges of perjury or conspiring to pervert the course of justice. No-one has ever been prosecuted.

After the 2005 general election, the Chief Electoral Officer, Brian Clarke, laid a complaint under the Electoral Act against the Labour Party.



ROSS GIBLIN/STUFF

John Bishop: “Revive stuff from the first big lockdown: bake, sew, cook, repair, renovate, read and crochet. They may all help.”

He alleged that the pledge card, a business card-sized document with key Labour Party promises on it, signed by Helen Clark and distributed to households, breached the Electoral Act.

In March 2006 police said there was “sufficient evidence to establish a prima facie case in respect of an offence under s221 of the Electoral Act”, but issuing a warning was sufficient. Parliament later passed legislation validating the party’s spending of public money for its own political purposes.

There has always been an informal back channel between the highest levels of government and Police National HQ.

Most New Zealanders would surely find it repugnant to think that police decisions about whether matters should be investigated, and who should, or should not, be prosecuted could be influenced by political pressure.

John Bishop is a Wellington political veteran who has covered politics, business and economics variously for Radio NZ, Television NZ and the National Business Review over the past 40-plus years. He helped set up the NZ Taxpayers Union. He has never joined any political party. He is the father of National List MP Chris Bishop. All views expressed are his own.

Relationships and conflict: How can I have better cross-cultural relationships?

Intercultural communication for everyday life / [edited by] John R. Baldwin, Robin R. Means Coleman, Alberto Gonzalez, and Suchitra Shenoy-Packer.

pages cm

Includes bibliographical references and index.

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How do intercultural relationships work?

Relational development All of us meet a variety of people every day, in our classes, at our workplace, at get-togethers, even on public transportation. We usually ignore the host of people that cross our paths. But some strangers become acquaintances and eventually close friends, lovers, or long-time partners. As we consider what draws us closer to one person than to another, we realize that these principles apply both to romantic relationships and friendships, to work- and other types of relationships. Romantic relationships pose different issues, because often we move toward living with another person in a long-term, even lifelong relationship. Different researchers provide different explanations as to why relationships—for people of the same or different cultures—grow closer.

Perhaps the simplest notion of what draws relational partners together is **propinquity**, or physical closeness between people. We are more likely to form relationships with those with whom we work, or study, or who live in the same apartment building—or, by extension, in our most frequently visited chatrooms or Twitter feeds—rather than someone who is distant (physical or virtually). Of course, we have contact with a great many people who are physically or electronically "close," but we do not form relationships with them, so something besides living close must make the relationships grow. In the multicultural world we describe in chapter 1, it is more and more likely that we will find ourselves in close contact with people culturally different from us, either in our physical or cyber world.

Some scholars suggest simply: the more similar we are to people, the more we will grow to like them. This **similarity-attraction hypothesis** (Byrne, 1971) explains that people are more likely to date or marry within their own groups, though there are also other explanations such as ethnocentrism, prejudice, and family pressure (see chapter 6). One interesting study finds that it is not so much demographic (racial, age, social class) similarity that draws people together, but similarity in values, hobbies, and beliefs (Hammer, 1986).

Others suggest that what drives relationships toward intimacy is **self-disclosure**, defined as revealing things about oneself to someone else, specifically things the other would not normally be known by the other and about which there is at least some risk of sharing. **Social penetration theory** explains this perspective (Altman & Taylor, 1973): The more we self-disclose, the closer we will grow. Self-disclosure varies in the intimacy of detail that we share (**depth** of self-disclosure) and the number of topic areas (**breadth** of self-disclosure). While some topics seem more superficial, such as hobbies or tastes in music, and others deeper, like political philosophy, we can share any topic with varying levels of depth. For example, Sebastian could share superficially that he is a Christian Democrat or he could discuss deeply how his self-esteem is related to his inability to play sports.

The theory has at least three implications for intercultural communication. First, culture influences what we share about and how we share about different topics. One study found that students from collectivist cultures in a U.S. Pacific university had a greater difference in depth of self-disclosure—but not breadth—between face-to-face and Internet relationships than students from individualistic cultures (Tokunaga, 2009). Second, in most cases, people self-disclose differently with those they perceive to be in their in-groups rather than out-groups, with the latter influenced by cultural norms and levels of prejudice. Finally, intercultural communication researchers often assume that, in deeper relationships (and thus, deeper levels of self-disclosure), issues of ethnic, age, class, and other diversity become much less important.

Uncertainty reduction theory (Berger & Calabrese, 1975) suggests that the better we can predict and explain the behaviors of another person, the more relationships will grow. We are more likely to try to reduce uncertainty under certain conditions, such as if the other person can reward or punish us, if we will have future interaction, or if the person acts in some way that we do not expect. The last situation seems especially important in cases where partners are culturally different. The theory accounts for a variety of aspects of perception and communication related to reduced uncertainty, such as sharing communication, perceiving similarity, having nonverbal warmth, or having the same networks of friend. In the 1980s, William Gudykunst extended uncertainty reduction to cross-cultural situations (Berger & Gudykunst, 1991), noting, for example, that in some high-context cultures (Japan),

people seek different information—more about background and context—to understand others than people in low-context, individualistic cultures (the U.S.A). He later added the notion of **anxiety—feelings** of uneasiness, tension, or apprehension that occur in intercultural interactions. Gudykunst (2005) suggests that uncertainty and anxiety are both necessary for the growth of intercultural relationships, as they keep us interested in interactions; but if either is too high, we might want to exit the relationship. It is not the presence of these things in our relationships, but our ability to manage them that is important.

Relational maintenance The approaches discussed before sometimes take an all-or-nothing approach: the more self-disclosure, the more predictability, and so on, the more the relationship will grow. A different perspective suggests that there are different tensions, or **dialectics**, within relationships. These tensions are unique in that both ends of each tension are always present, both contradicting and completing each other (Baxter & Montgomery, 1996). For example, in any relationship, one needs a balance of boundaries around information *and* sharing, of time with the partner (friend, romantic partner, spouse) *and* time with others, of predictability *and* novelty. Partners change from day to day and differ from each other. You might need more time together with your best friend right now, but she might be having a tough day and need a little space. And the tensions exist within individuals, between partners, and between the relationship and its surrounding relational contexts (should we spend more time with others outside the relationship or “just the two of us?”).

It is not so much the presence of the tensions that determine outcomes in relationships, but how the partners work to resolve them. Research is only recently applying the idea of dialectics to relationships across cultures.

Horses remember if you smiled or frowned when they last saw you

[DAILY NEWS](#)

<https://www.newscientist.com/article/2167423-horses-remember-if-you-smiled-or-frowned-when-they-last-saw-you/>
26 April 2018, updated 30 April 2018



Stop pulling faces!

Pal Teravagimov Photography / Getty

By **Sam Wong**

Why the long face? Horses can remember the facial expressions they see on human faces and respond differently if you smiled or frowned when they last saw you.

[Leanne Proops](#), now at the University of Portsmouth, UK, and her colleagues at the University of Sussex showed in 2016 that [horses respond differently to photographs of happy or angry human faces](#). Now they have studied whether horses can form lasting memories of people that depend on their facial expressions.

First, they showed horses a photo of one of two human models, displaying either a happy or angry face. Several hours later, the model visited the horse in person, this time with a neutral expression. As a control, some horses saw a different model in the second part to the one they saw in the photograph.

Crucially, the models didn't know which photo the horse had seen earlier. In the early 20th century, a horse called Clever Hans amazed audiences by [appearing to answer simple mathematical problems](#) by tapping his hoof. It turned out he was responding to involuntary cues from his trainer. Proops' study aimed to eliminate such cues. The team found that the horses remembered the models' previous facial expressions.



Did I see you earlier?
Universities of Sussex and Portsmouth

Look at me

Horses prefer to look at negative and threatening sights with their left eye, and positive social stimuli with their right eye. In the study, when they saw a model they had seen frowning earlier, they spent more time looking with their left eye. They also exhibited more stress-related behaviours, like scratching and floor sniffing. In contrast, when they saw a model they had seen smiling earlier, they spent more time looking with their right eye.

Many other animals have shown an ability to remember human faces, including sheep and fish. Wild crows will [hold a grudge for years](#) against people who have treated them badly, and even [teach other crows to mob their enemies](#).

However, the horses seem to form an opinion about people based only on their expression in a photograph. “That’s something we haven’t really seen in animals before,” says Proops.

“The horse family has the most expressive faces after the primates, so logically they pay attention to faces and expressions,” says [Frans de Waal](#) at Emory University in Atlanta. “Horses surrounded by people have ample opportunity to learn what our expressions mean.”

Journal reference: *Current Biology*, [DOI: 10.1016/j.cub.2018.03.035](https://doi.org/10.1016/j.cub.2018.03.035)

Babies can tell good people from bad

James Randerson

Thu 22 Nov 2007 23.56 GMT

<https://www.theguardian.com/science/2007/nov/22/humanbehaviour>

Babies as young as six months can distinguish between good and bad people, according to a study in which babies observed characters being helpful or unhelpful.

Scientists had thought that social judgments developed with language at about 18 months to two years old. But the results suggest that the ability to make moral judgments has innate foundations and is not just learned from parents.

"Here we have one component of what a sophisticated system of moral judgment requires," said Professor Karen Wynn, a psychologist at Yale University in Connecticut, part of the team which carried out the study.

The team studied the reactions of six and 10-month-old babies to scenarios involving a climber trying to scale a hill. The character - a circular blob with eyes - was helped or hindered by two different shaped blobs. The triangle helped push the climber up while an unhelpful square blocked the climber's ascent. The babies were offered the choice of holding the triangle or the square. Fourteen of the 16 10-month-olds and all 12 of the six-month-olds chose the triangle. The research is reported today in the journal Nature.

Wynn said that an innate sense of who plays by the social rules and who does not would be a great evolutionary advantage and important for the development of human sociality. But it was surprising that such young babies could make those judgments.

Touch Communicates Distinct Emotions

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Betsy App, Brittany A. Bulleit, and Ariane R. Jaskolka

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Emotion Copyright 2006 by the American Psychological Association
2006, Vol. 6, No. 3, 528–533 1528-3542/06/\$12.00 DOI: 10.1037/1528-3542.6.3.528

The study of emotional signaling has focused almost exclusively on the face and voice. In 2 studies, the authors investigated whether people can identify emotions from the experience of being touched by a stranger on the arm (without seeing the touch). In the 3rd study, they investigated whether observers can identify emotions from watching someone being touched on the arm. Two kinds of evidence suggest that humans can communicate numerous emotions with touch. First, participants in the United States (Study 1) and Spain (Study 2) could decode anger, fear, disgust, love, gratitude, and sympathy via touch at much-better-than-chance levels. Second, fine-grained coding documented specific touch behaviors associated with different emotions. In Study 3, the authors provide evidence that participants can accurately decode distinct emotions by merely watching others communicate via touch. The findings are discussed in terms of their contributions to affective science and the evolution of altruism and cooperation.

Touch is central to human social life. It is the most developed sensory modality at birth, and it contributes to cognitive, brain, and socioemotional development throughout infancy and childhood (Field, 2001; Hertenstein, 2002; Stack, 2001). In most cultures, adults touch in specific ways when flirting, expressing power, soothing, playing, and maintaining proximity between child and caretaker (Eibl-Eibesfeldt, 1989). Nonhuman primates use touch to groom, to reconcile following aggressive encounters, to initiate sexual encounters, to reward cooperative acts of food sharing, to maintain proximity with caretakers, and to soothe conspecifics (de Waal, 1989).

With respect to the communication of emotion, two general claims have been offered regarding touch. First, touch is thought to communicate the hedonic tone of emotion (Hertenstein, 2005; Hertenstein & Campos, 2001; Jones & Yarbrough, 1985; Knapp & Hall, 1997). That is, touch communicates either positively valenced warmth and intimacy or negatively valenced pain or discomfort. Second, touch is thought to be an intensifier of emotion-related communication. That is, touch intensifies the emotional displays from other modalities (Knapp & Hall, 1997).

In the studies reported in this article, we provide an answer to the following question: Can touch communicate specific emotions? Our studies were guided by three motivations. The first pertains to modality. Studies of the communication of emotion have almost exclusively focused on the face and voice (Ekman, 1993; Scherer, Johnstone, & Klasmeyer, 2003). In the present studies, we asked whether individuals could communicate distinct emotions through tactile stimulation (Tronick, 1995) and whether they could accurately decode emotions by merely observing other individuals communicate via touch.

Our second aim was to address whether humans can communicate more emotions than previously thought. Studies of facial and vocal communication of emotion have identified displays of anger, contempt, disgust, fear, happiness, sadness, and surprise (Ekman, 1993) and, more recently, embarrassment and shame (Keltner & Buswell, 1997) and varieties of laughter (Smoski & Bachorowski, 2003). Our study is the first to provide rigorous evidence showing that humans can reliably signal love, gratitude, and sympathy with nonverbal behavior (for discussions on the empirical failures to document a facial display of sympathy, see Haidt & Keltner, 1999; Keltner & Buswell, 1996).

Recent theorizing about the origins of cooperation and altruism assumes that humans can communicate these prosocial emotions with nonverbal behavior (R. H. Frank, 2002; Sober, 2002). This theorizing asserts that altruism and cooperation can emerge in long-term interactions when (a) altruistic interactions are rewarding for the benefactor and (b) people can identify cooperative individuals, which increases the benefits and reduces the risks of cooperative and altruistic exchanges. When these two conditions

are met, altruistic actions are more rewarding for the actor and are more likely to be reciprocated. Reliable signals of gratitude, love, and sympathy help meet these two conditions. Nonverbal displays of prosocial emotion, in particular gratitude, should act as rewards for altruistic acts, through the intrinsic pleasure derived from touch and the social significance of expressing gratitude. Nonverbal displays of prosocial emotions are also likely signals of an individual's cooperative intent; that is, people who frequently communicate compassion, gratitude, or love through any modality, including touch, are likely to have more prosocial dispositions and are thus more likely to be cooperative interaction partners. For these reasons, we expected gratitude, love, and sympathy to be communicated via touch.

Our final aim was to provide descriptions of the tactile signals that people use to communicate emotion. The field of emotion has been advanced by precise characterizations of emotion-specific signals (Ekman, 1993; Scherer et al., 2003). Here, we provide descriptions of emotion-specific touch behaviors.

.....

Results

...

There are plausible alternative interpretations of our findings. The most prominent concerns what participants were inferring from tactile communication. We have conceptualized the studies in terms of the communication of emotions. A clear alternative is that encoders may have been communicating intentions rather than emotions. Fridlund (1997) has argued that facial displays communicate intentions rather than subjective feeling. The same may be true in our studies investigating tactile signals. Future research should explore this alternative explanation.

Our investigation advances the understanding of emotional communication in a second fashion, by providing evidence that individuals can, from visual observation alone, detect emotion in tactile behavior. With the exception of gratitude, all of the emotions in Studies 1 and 2 that were accurately decoded by touch (anger, fear, disgust, love, and sympathy) were accurately decoded by participants who only viewed the tactile signals but did not experience tactile stimulation. These findings raise the interesting question of whether decoding accuracy would be enhanced, or diminished, when touch is both seen and felt—a question for future research.

Our three studies advance the study of emotional communication in a third way, by documenting that people can readily communicate three prosocial emotions with nonverbal behavior—love, gratitude, and sympathy. These findings fit evolutionary claims that cooperation is facilitated by clear signals of prosocial intent, for we assume that tactile communications of love, gratitude, and sympathy reward prosocial behavior and signal prosocial intent—claims warranting empirical attention. These findings also raise the interesting possibility that touch may convey more positive emotions than other modalities, such as the face.

A number of important questions related to the current studies await empirical attention. Are distinct emotions communicated via

touch in cultures that are not known to be high-contact cultures (e.g., some Asian cultures)? How does both seeing and tactilely perceiving touch concurrently influence the decoding of emotions? How might touch influence the decoder's central and peripheral physiology? Are the tactile signals of sympathy, love, and gratitude more or less reliable depending on whether the encoder is intending to deceive? These and other questions related to the communication of emotion via touch are ripe for investigation.

Experiential and Affective Learning (self-directed)

Most of the references are discussing formal courses, with defined teacher and defined students.

For the purposes of this booklet, I am intending to introduce you to **self-directed learning of emotions and affect**. This is a more subtle topic.

The underlying concepts are the same.

In the words of Lewis and Williams (1994, p.5):

“In its simplest form, experiential learning means learning from experience or learning by doing. Experiential education first immerses learners in an experience and then encourages reflection about the experience to develop new skills, new attitudes, or new ways of thinking.”

To that end, Chapman et al. have provided a list of characteristics that should be present in order to define an activity or method as experiential. These characteristics include:

1. *Mixture of content and process*: There must be a balance between the experiential activities and the underlying content or theory.
2. *Absence of excessive judgment*: The instructor must create a safe space for students to work through their own process of self-discovery.
3. *Engagement in purposeful endeavors*: In experiential learning, the learner is the selfteacher, therefore there must be “meaning for the student in the learning.” The learning activities must be personally relevant to the student.
4. *Encouraging the big picture perspective*: Experiential activities must allow the students to make connections between the learning they are doing and the world. Activities should build in students the ability see relationships in complex systems and find a way to work within them.
5. *The role of reflection*: Students should be able to reflect on their own learning, bringing “the theory to life” and gaining insight into themselves and their interactions with the world.
6. *Creating emotional investment*: Students must be fully immersed in the experience, not merely doing what they feel is required of them. The “process needs to engage the learner to a point where what is being learned and experience strikes a critical, central chord within the learner.”
7. *The re-examination of values*: By working within a space that has been made safe for self-exploration, students can begin to analyze and even alter their own values.
8. *The presence of meaningful relationships*: One part of getting students to see their learning in the context of the whole world is to start by showing the relationships between “learner to self, learner to teacher, and learner to learning environment.”
9. *Learning outside one’s perceived comfort zones*: “Learning is enhanced when students are given the opportunity to operate outside of their own perceived comfort zones.” This doesn’t refer just to physical environment, but also to the social environment. This could include, for instance, “being accountable for one’s actions and owning the consequences” (Chapman, McPhee, & Proudman, 1995, p. 243).

From: Best Practices in Experiential Learning

https://www.mcgill.ca/elc/files/elc/doc_ryerson_bestpracticesryerson.pdf

CHAPTER 2 WHAT IS EXPERIENTIAL LEARNING?

James W. Gentry

<https://wmich.edu/sites/default/files/attachments/u5/2013/WHAT%20IS%20EXPERIENTIAL%20%20LEARNING%3F%20%20.pdf>

Experiential Learning Theory as a Guide for Experiential Educators in Higher Education by ALICE Y. KOLB & DAVID A. KOLB

Experience Based Learning Systems, Inc.

<https://nsuworks.nova.edu/elthe/vol1/iss1/7/>

25 Social Emotional Learning Activities & How They Promote Student Well-Being April 19, 2021

<https://www.prodigygame.com/main-en/blog/social-emotional-learning-activities/>

Affective Learning Activities to Promote Values Comprehension by Tricia Tooman

by Tricia Tooman, Partner, Soulstice Training

<http://www.soulsticetraining.com/commentary/affective.html>

Emotional highs in adult experiential learning by Sandris Zeivots

University of Technology Sydney

<https://files.eric.ed.gov/fulltext/EJ1120642.pdf>

The need to prepare future teachers to understand and combat homophobia in schools

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<https://journals.co.za/doi/pdf/10.10520/EJC159188>

Human Empathy Opening up Affective Learning

To weigh different types of disability, we need to understand the impacts both in terms of physical resources required for support and what are the emotional impacts – negative and positive. Although this might sound simple, for example how effective are humans in communicating levels of pain – both tissue damage and emotional pain?

Two people who show or showed successful empathic listening, under the challenge of different cultures are John Howard Griffin and Andrew Solomon.

Far From the Tree Parents, Children and the Search for Identity by Andrew Solomon

Extract from: **Far From the Tree** by Andrew Solomon

... "There is something ironic in prejudice against the disabled and their families, because their plight might befall anybody. Straight men are unlikely to wake up gay one morning, and white children don't become black; but any of us could be disabled in an instant" ... "Worldwide, some 550 million people are disabled. The disability-rights scholar Tobin Siebers has written, "The cycle of life runs in actuality from disability to temporary ability back to disability, and that only if you are among the most fortunate." ...

... "The able-bodied can be generous narcissists: they eagerly bestow what they feel good about giving without considering how it will be received. Conversely, the social model of disability demands that society modify the way business is done to empower people with disabilities, and we make such adjustments only when lawmakers accept that life can be painful for those who live at the margins. Patronizing gestures can be justly scorned, but increased empathy is often a precondition of political acceptance and an engine of reform. Many disabled people say that the social disapprobation they experience is much more burdensome than the disability from which they suffer, maintaining simultaneously that they suffer only because society treats them badly, and that they have unique experiences that set them apart from the world—that they are eminently special and in no way different" ...

Andrew Soloman's book is astonishing in that each chapter is an intimate and sensitive exploration into a very different world, a world of extreme emotional challenge, worlds relying on dramatically different cultures. Not just the children's cultural world, but usually the parents have come from a different cultural environment. Andrew Soloman spent 10 years researching this book. Few people create such understanding of so many cultures, in such a period of time.

The Table of Contents illustrates the breadth of cultures understood and written about so well:

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Review of

Far from the Tree by Andrew Solomon – review

A moving and thorough examination of parental love and acceptance of 'difficult' children



"P

arenting," writes Andrew Solomon in *Far from the Tree*, "is no sport

for perfectionists." It's an irony of the book, 10 years in the making and his first since *The Noonday Demon*, that by militating against perfectionism, he only leaves the reader in greater awe of the art of the achievable. The book starts out as a study of parents raising "difficult" children, and ends up as an affirmation of what it is to be human.

The project grew out of Solomon's desire to forgive his own parents, who, while they effortlessly accepted his dyslexia as he was growing up – his mother campaigned for his rights in the face of educational prejudice – flunked the same test when it came to his sexuality. (An early sign that he was gay, writes Solomon, with the dryness of tone that makes the book so enjoyable, is that "when I was 10, I became fascinated by the tiny principality of Liechtenstein".) They didn't throw him out of the house, but neither did they disguise their disappointment. Years later, he got to thinking about how parents deal generally with children whose identities fall outside of their own – what he calls the child's "horizontal" as opposed to "vertical" identity – and the result is a fascinating examination of the accommodation of difference.

Religion, race, language and nationality are the customary verticals passed down from parent to child; horizontal refers to traits in a child that are foreign to the parents, either inherent, like a physical disability, or acquired, like criminality. "Vertical identities are usually respected as identities," writes Solomon. "Horizontal ones are often treated as flaws." Chapters follow on families coping with autism, dwarfism, schizophrenia, Down's syndrome, disability, deafness, child prodigy, transgender issues, criminality and children born of rape, and the first lesson of Solomon's research was the non-transferable sympathies of each group. Participants in the book who had shown extraordinary humanity in their own difficult circumstances bridled at the prospect of being lumped in with what they saw as less deserving special interests.

"Deaf people didn't want to be compared to people with schizophrenia; some parents of schizophrenics were creeped out by dwarfs. The prodigies and their families objected to being in a book with the severely disabled. Some children of rape felt that their emotional struggle was trivialised when they were compared to gay activists."

Solomon spoke to some 300 families in the course of researching the book, a rebuke to everything shoddy and dashed off in the culture, and the density of his empirical

evidence decimates casual assumption. What unites most of his interviewees is a political sense of injustice in the way they are perceived by the mainstream. "Fixing is the illness model," writes Solomon. "Acceptance is the identity model."

With delicacy, he weighs the rights of various pressure groups to self-definition against the pragmatic limits of their arguments. In almost all cases, he finds, it is a better time to be different than it ever was. In the chapter on deafness, for example, he tells heartbreaking stories of deaf children growing up 30 years ago being denied any language, when their parents prevented them from learning sign, thinking it unduly stigmatising. Now, deaf- and sign-culture is widely accepted as valuable in its own right and deaf pride one of the most successful advocacy movements around.

Autism, the subject of Solomon's most interesting chapter because of the complex nature of the condition, is trickier. He interviews animal behaviour expert Temple Grandin, who is autistic, and has worked hard to explain what the condition is like from within, she argues for "aspie and autistic" pride without denying its drawbacks. "If you got rid of all the autism genetics," she says, "you'd get rid of scientists, musicians, mathematicians and all you'd have left is dried-up bureaucrats." Solomon notes that campaigners for autistic pride suffer somewhat in their advocacy, since they are, by definition, autistic, and lack the charm that campaigns of that nature tend to run on.

It's a timely book; the internet has changed the fortunes of many millennial children who might otherwise have grown up feeling isolated, and, along with their parents, given them communities. "I was determined not to be around folks who saw us as tragic," one exasperated mother of a disabled child told Solomon. "Unfortunately, that included my family, most professionals, and just about everyone else I knew." But online, she had instant access to others in her position.

The most contentious of these advocacy groups are the "neurodiversity" campaigners, also known as Mad Pride, who argue for the rights of those with serious mental illnesses to reduce, and in some cases reject, their medication. Here, Solomon presents page after page of interviews with those tormented by psychosis, most of whom became ill in their 20s, compounding a sense in their parents of having "lost" them. Contrary to other categories in the book, it is hard to see schizophrenia as anything other than a theft of identity, and Solomon quotes E Fuller Torrey, the psychiatrist and researcher into the illness: "Freedom to be insane is an illusory freedom."

Consistent across all categories is the extraordinary tenacity of parents' love for their children. (This is not the same as straightforward acceptance.) There are moments of casual heartbreak. The father of Maisie, a severely mentally disabled child in New York, takes her to Central Park and reflects on the fact that, in his position, no one ever thinks to come over "and suggest that their child could play with your child". If it hadn't been for Maisie, he adds, he would have been one of them.

There are reminders that, however hard they try, parents can't always protect their children from bigotry, most starkly in the case of Lateisha Green, a transgender woman from Syracuse, New York, shot dead at a party with the words: "We don't want faggots here."

And there are surprises. It's a virtue of the book that it ranges across the socioeconomic scale, and Solomon finds that those parents with high socioeconomic status "tend towards perfectionism, and have a harder time living with perceived defects" in their children than those struggling at the lower end.

The most fascinating and painful interviews are with those parents who forfeit the good opinion of their peers by not doing what is "expected" of them: a woman from Oxford who, after a terrible period of indecision, gives her mentally and physically disabled child up for adoption; the mother of two severely autistic children, who, when her husband asks, "Would you marry me again?", replies, "Yeah, but not with the kids." She adds, "Do I love my kids? Yes. Will I do everything for them? Yes." But, "I wouldn't do it again. I think anybody who tells you they would is lying."

The most powerful interview of the book is with Tom and Sue Klebold, parents of Dylan, one of the two teenagers who carried out the [Columbine massacre](#), and who killed themselves after the shooting. The Klebolds have been vilified on the assumption that they must, surely, have contributed to their son's mental state but there is, Solomon writes, no evidence for it. Of everyone he interviewed, he felt the greatest connection with them. "It would have been better for the world if Dylan had never been born," says Sue of her son. "But I believe it would not have been better for me."

Solomon is never sentimental and, with a cool eye, he acknowledges that "aggrandising the nobility of woe is a coping strategy". Nonetheless, time and again in the book, a positive outlook is shown to be helpful. "A study that looked at children with various complications at birth found, simply, 'the children of mothers who had tried harder to find meaning had a better development outcome'." The mother of a child lost to gang culture would not give up her idea of him as basically good. "In the end, his mother had believed him into becoming who he had sometimes pretended to be."

There are philosophical dividends that slowly accrue as you read story after story of ordinary families made remarkable by circumstance, and Solomon quotes [Foucault's](#) argument that if error is "at the root of what makes human thought and its history" then to prohibit error would be to "end evolution". As [EM Forster](#) wrote, "the perfect organism would be silent". At the end of the book, Solomon writes of having a son with his partner, John, with the aid of a surrogate – a family he never thought he'd have. "What did I do?" asks the mother of a child with dwarfism who would never quite be like her. "I loved him."

Book review: 'Far From the Tree: Parents, Children, and the Search for Identity' by Andrew Solomon

By **Lisa Zeidner**

November 21, 2012

https://www.washingtonpost.com/opinions/book-review-far-from-the-tree-parents-children-and-the-search-for-identity-by-andrew-solomon/2012/11/21/099600e6-3024-11e2-9f50-0308e1e75445_story.html

Warning: Andrew Solomon's new book, about the parents of children with serious medical problems, would make the world's worst baby shower gift. From dwarfism and Down syndrome to schizophrenia and autism, Solomon delivers a compendium of news you don't want to expect when you're expecting. Although some of the conditions startle, the book is no lurid freak show. On the contrary, Solomon forcefully showcases parents who not only aren't horrified by the differences they encounter in their offspring, but who rise to the occasion by embracing them. In so doing, they reveal a "shimmering humanity" that speaks to our noblest impulses to nurture.

"Far From the Tree" is massively ambitious and, also, just simply massive. It's exhaustive and occasionally exhausting, but more often inspirational about the "infinitely deep" and mysterious love of parents for their children. Motivated in part by his difficult experience negotiating his homosexuality, Solomon, the author of the National Book Award-winning book on depression "The Noonday Demon," spent a decade interviewing more than 300 families, compiling 40,000 pages of transcripts about 10 widely varied conditions. "It would have been easier to write a book about five conditions," he acknowledges in his introduction. "I wanted, however, to explore the spectrum of difference." So he visited juvenile criminals in Minneapolis and a congenitally deaf village in Bali. He interviewed victims of horrific incest and family abuse. He spent time with women who bore children conceived in rape and even with child prodigies — whose gifts, paradoxically, force them to face issues similar to those of children with severe disabilities.

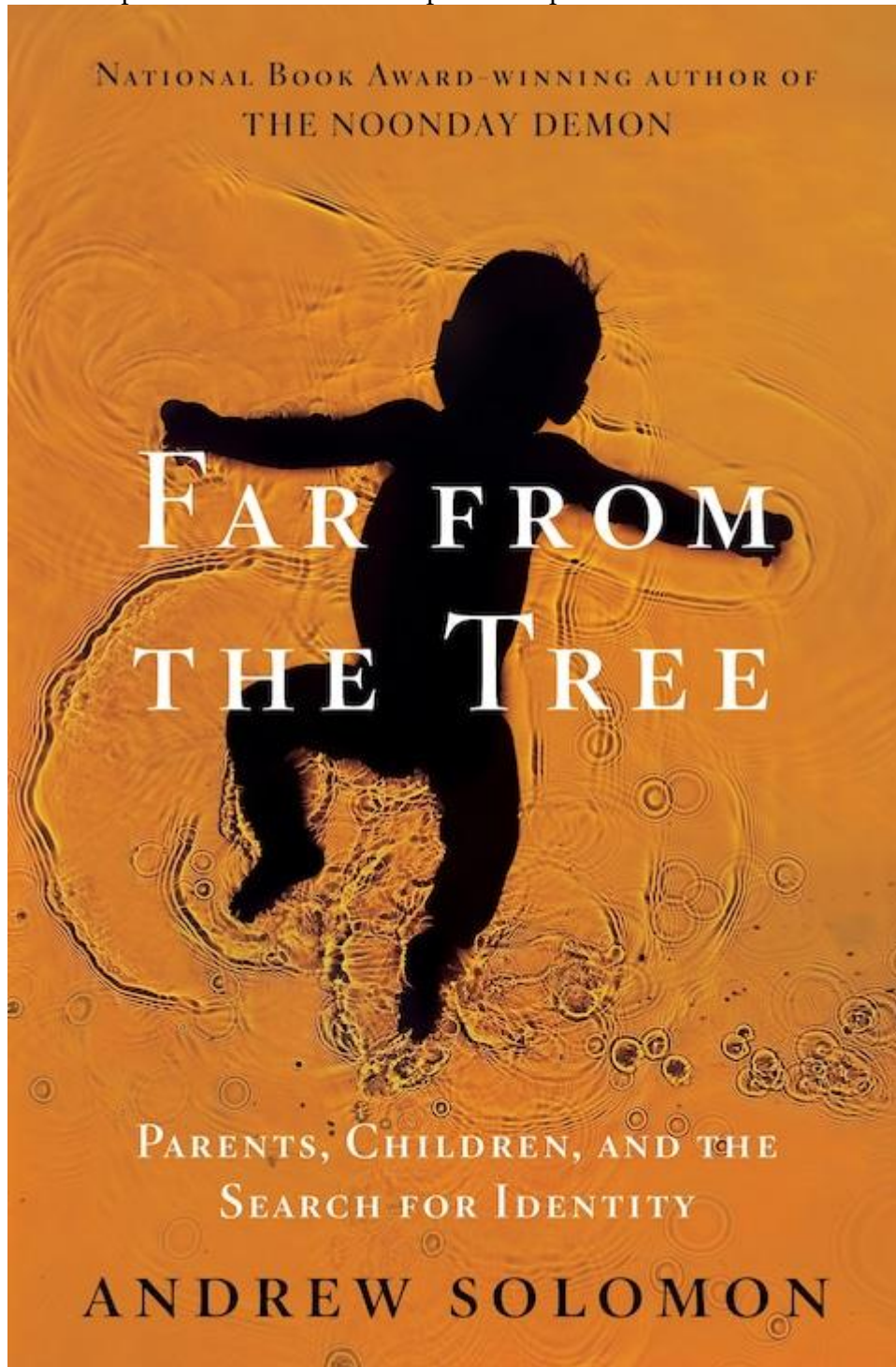
Solomon stresses a common dilemma: All the parents must navigate the "tension between identity and illness," or "between cure and acceptance." So, for instance, should a deaf child be encouraged to learn sign language and join the deaf community, or, contrarily, to learn to read lips and speak so as to better assimilate? Should the parents of a dwarf help their child feel comfortable with his size, or submit him to limb-lengthening operations? Are the parents of a profoundly disabled child within their moral rights to administer growth-inhibiting medication, so they can still lift their "pillow angel" by hand to change her diapers rather than having to hoist her up at adult size with an elaborate medical crane? At what point should parents allow their male child to wear a dress to school or allow him to take puberty-delaying drugs, so as to make his eventual sex-change surgery easier?

Often Solomon embraces finding a balanced, measured middle ground. Autism, he says, "can be mitigated by some combination of treatment and acceptance, specific to each case. It is important not to get carried away by either the impulse only to treat or the impulse only to accept." About transgender children, he notes, "Parents must determine whether such children are in a transient obsession or expressing a fundamental

identity. . . . Parents must take care not to squash their child's identity, nor to build it up so much that they create the truth to which they intend to respond."

Easier said than done. Much of the heartbreak in "Far From the Tree" comes from parents' struggles to arrive at that often elusive balance. As one expert Solomon quotes says about schizophrenia, "When an illness is viewed as inexplicable and impenetrable, people tend to react to it with one of two extremes: either they *stigmatize* it or they *romanticize* it. It's hard to know which is worse." The parents of violent criminals often feel guilty in

contradictory ways — for having been both too lenient with their children and too hard on them. Over and over, we watch parents carom between hope and despair.



“Far From the Tree: Parents, Children and the Search for Identity” by Andrew Solomon (Scribner)

A large part of the book is composed of introductory lessons on the history, science and treatment choices of each condition. This context is necessary, but occasionally cumbersome. Solomon is not a physician or social scientist. Experts in each field will no doubt have bones to pick with his methodology — the size of the cross-cultural cohort, for example, or the heavy skewing of his samples toward people of means. The book’s structure is a bit awkward because, despite 199 pages of bibliography and footnotes (merely “a compressed form,” he reminds us, and to be found “at greater length online”), the overall approach is more journalistic than scholarly. Given the amount of material he has synthesized, Solomon might have offered more of an overarching theory about the qualities of the successful parents. Rather too insistently he just emphasizes, and praises, their positive outlooks, their ability to play uncomplainingly the hand they’re dealt.

That said, “Far From the Tree” doesn’t purport to be an original work of theoretical research on family dynamics. It’s more of a hybrid series of thematically linked oral histories, the majority of which are deeply moving about the strength of parents who display heroic energy and creativity. As one of hundreds of examples, here is how Emily and Charles work to stimulate their profoundly retarded newborn, and the kind of detail Solomon is consistently able to draw from his subjects:

“Emily sewed a quilt that had a different fabric every few inches — terry cloth, velvet, AstroTurf — so that every time Jason moved he would experience a new sensation. When he was six months old, they took a giant roasting pan and filled it with Jell-O, forty packages’ worth, and lowered him into it so he could writhe around and experience the strange texture, and eat some of it, too. They used brushes on the soles of his feet to make his toes curl up.”

The pair who most exemplify the altruistic, self-aware love that Solomon celebrates are Tom and Sue Klebold. Their son was Dylan Klebold, one of the two teenagers who rampaged at Columbine High School in Littleton, Colo., on April 20, 1999. The number of dead from that horrific event is generally listed at 13 — but the two perpetrators also died. Tom and Sue were utterly blindsided by the event, and had to deal with not only their own shock and grief, but with ostracization from their Colorado community. “I can never decide whether it’s worse to think your child was hard-wired to be like this and that you couldn’t have done anything, or to think he was a good person and something set this off in him,” Sue says. “What I’ve learned from being an outcast since the tragedy has given me insight into what it must have felt like for my son to be marginalized.”

Despite those hardships, the Klebolds have stayed together — and stayed in their Colorado town. As Sue reassures another woman who has one son in jail and another who committed suicide, “You can’t appreciate or believe this now, but if you plunge deep into this, it will lead you to enlightenment. It’s not the path you would have chosen, but it will make you a better and stronger person.” With this and many of the other profiles he has so assiduously collected, Solomon allows his readers to witness the “extraordinary clarity” of such love.

Lisa Zeidner is the author of five novels, most recently “Love Bomb.” She is a professor at Rutgers University in Camden, N.J.

FAR FROM THE TREE

Parents, Children, and the Search for Identity

By Andrew Solomon

Scribner. 962 pp. \$37.50

Immersive Experience (links to video and audio)

It is not possible to provide a fully immersive experience within a printed textbook (if a textbook is even available on the chosen topic!??).

Video or film with sound, is a big improvement, if the real life experience is not practically or safely available.

This booklet includes many links to video or references to film or video materials, to provide this often good substitute for truly immersive experiences.

Video may be used to bring a person up to speed, so that they may gain the most from a real immersive experience. A lot of care should be used, that the video is actually of excellent quality and unbiased cultural value. If not, it may prejudice the trainee and possibly destroy the value of the real immersive experience.

Video may be in the form of documentary, or drama or news reports. Sound only may be voice, or songs. Good examples of emotional communication by song are:

In the Ghetto Song by Elvis Presley

Elvis Presley In the Ghetto

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=2Ox1Tore9nw>

Lyrics

As the snow flies
On a cold and gray Chicago mornin'
A poor little baby child is born
In the ghetto
(In the ghetto)

And his mama cries
'Cause if there's one thing that she don't need
It is another hungry mouth to feed
In the ghetto
(In the ghetto)

People, don't you understand
The child needs a helping hand
Or he'll grow to be an angry young man some day
Take a look at you and me
Are we too blind to see?
Do we simply turn our heads
And look the other way

Well, the world turns
And a hungry little boy with a runny nose
Plays in the street as the cold wind blows
In the ghetto
(In the ghetto)

And his hunger burns
So he starts to roam the streets at night
And he learns how to steal
And he learns how to fight
In the ghetto
(In the ghetto)

Then one night in desperation
The young man breaks away
He buys a gun, steals a car
Tries to run, but he don't get far
And his mama cries

As a crowd gathers 'round an angry young man
Face down on the street with a gun in his hand
In the ghetto
(In the ghetto)

And as her young man dies
(In the ghetto)
On a cold and gray Chicago mornin'
Another little baby child is born
In the ghetto
(In the ghetto)

And his mama cries
(In the ghetto)
(In the ghetto)
(Ah)

Source: [Musixmatch](#)

Songwriters: Gram David Bates / Steve Culwick
In the Ghetto lyrics © Sony/atv Songs Llc, R & H Music Company, Atal Music

Elvis Presley song - Walk a Mile in My Shoes

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=fUKPcStDjwQ>

If I could be you, if you could be me
For just one hour
If we could find a way
To get inside each other's mind, uh huh

If you could see you through my eyes
Instead of your ego
I believe you'd be, I believe you'd be

Surprised to see

That you've been blind, uh huh

Walk a mile in my shoes

Just walk a mile in my shoes

And before you abuse, criticize and accuse

Just walk a mile in my shoes

Now, if we spend the day

Throwing stones at one another

'Cause I don't think, 'cause I don't think

Or wear my hair same way you do, uh huh

Well, I may be common people

But I'm your brother

And when you strike out through tryna hurt me

It's hurtin' you, Lord have mercy

Walk a mile in my shoes

Just walk a mile in my shoes

Yeah, before you abuse, criticize and accuse

Just walk a mile in my shoes

Now, there are people on reservations

And out in the ghetto

And brother, there

But for the grace of God

Go you and I, uh huh

Uh, if I only had the wings

Of a little angel

Don't you know I'd fly

To the top of the mountain

And then I'd cry, cry, cry

Walk a mile in my shoes

Just walk a mile in my shoes

Yeah, before you abuse, criticize and accuse

Walk a mile in my shoes

Walk a mile in my shoes

Just walk a mile in my shoes

Yeah, before you abuse, criticize and accuse

Walk a mile in my shoes

Source: [LyricFind](#)

Songwriters: Joe South

Walk a Mile in My Shoes lyrics © Concord Music Publishing LLC, Peermusic Publishing

The Needle and the Damage Done

Song by Neil Young

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Hd3oqvnDKQk>

Lyrics

I caught you knockin' at my cellar door
I love you, baby, can I have some more?
Ooh, ooh, the damage done

I hit the city and I lost my band
I watched the needle take another man
Gone, gone, the damage done

I sing the song because I love the man
I know that some of you don't understand
Milk blood to keep from running out

I've seen the needle and the damage done
A little part of it in everyone
But every junkie's like a settin' sun

Source: [LyricFind](#)

Songwriters: Neil Young

The Needle and the Damage Done lyrics © Broken Fiddle Music, Peermusic Publishing, Words & Music A Div Of Big Deal Music LLC

Imagine

Song by John Lennon

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=YkgkThdzX-8>

Lyrics

Imagine there's no heaven
It's easy if you try
No hell below us
Above us, only sky

Imagine all the people
Livin' for today
Ah

Imagine there's no countries
It isn't hard to do

Nothing to kill or die for
And no religion, too

Imagine all the people
Livin' life in peace
You

You may say I'm a dreamer
But I'm not the only one
I hope someday you'll join us
And the world will be as one

Imagine no possessions
I wonder if you can
No need for greed or hunger
A brotherhood of man

Imagine all the people
Sharing all the world
You

You may say I'm a dreamer
But I'm not the only one
I hope someday you'll join us
And the world will live as one

Source: [LyricFind](#)

Songwriters: John Winston Lennon
Imagine lyrics © O/B/O Apra Amcos

Can You Walk in My Shoes (and learn the realities of my life)?

The recorded history of teaching by requiring students to take an active part in the learning process goes back to Socrates 470BCE to 399 BCE, though it is probably far older than that.

The following brief extract from *Teaching for Experiential Learning - Five Approaches that Work* by Scott D. Wurdinger and Julie A. Carlson illustrates how many real life situations need immersive experience, to learn the breadth and the width of the issues.

The learner usually will not be highly aware of what can be learned or what is needed to be learned. Life is like that. Many of the issues are not as concrete as income per year, distance from home to school, or types of vegetables available in the shop.

Issues such as prejudice, cultural ignorance, societal privilege are affective and subtle. Sometimes it is said that values are behind the eyes ie not so easy for us to see inside ourselves. We should be aiming at a gut visceral understanding, where we have not just raw information, but can see the real world implications and alternatives.

These types of issues are best learned through immersive, unstructured learning. Facing these types of issues may require us to re-evaluate many of our cultural assumptions, from different viewpoints.

Teaching for Experiential Learning - Five Approaches that Work addresses generally fairly concrete issues, rather than cultural and sociological. Perhaps teaching medicine, or sociology venture into the more challenging affective areas of teaching. This book touches only very briefly on affective and cultural teaching.

An example of self-directed learning of affect, prejudice and culture is given to us in John Howard Griffin's book: *Black Like Me* and his autobiography.

Before reading those books, *Teaching for Experiential Learning - Five Approaches that Work* gives a gentle introduction to Experiential Learning. It lays out the general issues faced in Experiential Teaching and will aid in understanding what author??? Had to do, to manage his own experiential learning project and in teaching other people what he learned.

John Howard Griffin was very empathic, as seen in the article *Rereading Black Like Me by John Howard Griffin*. Yet even so, he chose the intimate, high risk immersive experiential learning, in his self set quest to understand what life was like for black Africans in USA.

For those of us who are less empathic, we will have to work harder to understand the lives and implications of those lives, in our societies. Will you accept that challenge?

What was achieved by John Howard Griffin's high risk self-directed project?

Black Like Me: 50th Anniversary Edition is published by Wings Press (£15.93).

Black Like Me may be read (free) at Archive.org:

<https://archive.org/details/blacklikeme1961grif>

Race in John Howard Griffin's *Black like me* may be read (free) at Archive.org:

<https://archive.org/details/raceinjohnhoward0000unse/page/n147/mode/2up>

Extract from Race in John Howard Griffin's **Black Like Me**.

The following selection offers a brief overview of John Howard Griffin's early life, education, and writing career, paying special attention to the impact Griffin's military service and years of blindness had on his professional and spiritual growth. The authors note Griffin's most significant novels (The Devil Rides Outside and Nuni), as well as his most important nonfiction works. The authors describe the controversy that followed the publication of Griffin's best-known work, Black Like Me, noting that its frank depiction of a racist society "struck a nerve" with many readers.

His most famous book, *Black ' Like Me*, chronicles the racism he encountered in the South when he disguised himself as a black man. The controversial subject matter of his works catapulted Griffin into the role of social commentator, combating what he called the "very worst development of recent years ... that people no longer feel a sense of horror (or even *uneasiness*) in the face of injustice that simply wrecks human lives."

Education and Military Service

Griffin was born in Dallas, Texas. While in his teens, he attended the Lycee Descartes in Tours, France, where he studied science, music, and philosophy. After graduation, Griffin studied psychiatry at the Ecole de Medecine de Tours. Despite his decision to pursue a career in medicine, Griffin continued his musical studies. He collaborated on a book about the early modern music of the Roman Catholic church and combined his love for music and medical science by prescribing music therapy for his patients.

When World War II broke out, Griffin was placed in a supervisory position at the Asylum of Tours, became active in the French Resistance, and helped many Jews escape Nazi persecution by loading them on ambulances under the pretense that they were patients being transferred to other facilities. When France fell to Germany in 1940, Griffin returned to the United States and enlisted in the Air Force, serving in the Pacific, first on the island of Nuni and then on Morotai as a liaison between the islanders and American forces. During an air raid on Morotai, he sustained head injuries that left him legally blind and received a medical discharge.

After the war ended, Griffin returned to France to study music with Nadia Boulanger—an acclaimed conductor, lecturer, and teacher of music composition.

While researching the origins of the Gregorian chant, a melody used in Roman Catholic liturgies, he visited the Couvent St. Jacques as well as the Benedictine Abbey of Solesmes, where he became familiar with the teachings of Roman Catholicism.

Blindness, Writing, and Civil Rights

After Griffin completely lost his sight in 1947, he returned to the United States to attend schools for the blind and to study philosophy with Jacques Maritain, of whom he later wrote a biography. He eventually settled on his parents' farm in Mansfield, Texas, and took up cattle-breeding, teaching piano, and creative writing. By dictating his work into a wire recorder, Griffin was able to compose *The Devil Rides Outside* and *Nuni*.

During this time, Griffin also began taking strychnine to treat a case of malaria which had left him partially paralyzed. An unexpected side effect of the drug restored circulation to blood vessels in Griffin's eyes and allowed him to regain his vision. In 1959 he suggested to the editors of *Sepia*, a magazine directed at a black audience, that he research a story on the treatment of the black person in the American South. In order to experience the hardships suffered by his subjects, Griffin affected the appearance of a black man using sun lamps, vegetable dyes, and pigment-enhancing drugs. His experiences were reported in *Sepia's* "Journey into Shame" series and were later published as *Black Like Me*. Griffin's reproach of southern white society prompted hostility in his community, and, in order to escape harassment, he and his family fled to Mexico. Upon his return to Texas in 1961, Griffin abandoned writing projects that were near completion and began lecturing on civil rights. Prior to the 1969 publication of *The Church and the Black Man*, which called for the Catholic church to become more actively involved in the civil rights movement, he befriended and worked with Trappist monk and author Thomas Merton. Between 1968 and 1971, Griffin made frequent trips to Gethsemani Abbey in Kentucky, where he visited Merton and made numerous spiritual retreats, eventually earning a commission from the Merton Legacy to write Merton's biography. Poor health prevented Griffin from meeting deadlines for the book, however, and permission was revoked in 1978. Griffin died in 1980, but the journals he kept while working on the biography were published a year later as *The Hermitage Journals*.

Griffin's Two Novels

Griffin's first novel, *The Devil Rides Outside*, chronicles a young man's struggle for spiritual salvation. While studying at a monastery, the narrator longs for the mystical spirituality and inner peace that the monks have achieved, and strives to imitate their lifestyle by curbing his own carnal desires. While the work was praised for its accurate descriptions of monastic life and its confessional honesty, critics thought the novel overlong, unorganized, and marred by extended philosophical digressions which were often disguised as speeches. Griffin also faced opposition from the Legion for Decent Literature, which took offense at graphic descriptions of the characters' sexual urges and encounters; these passages became the basis for lawsuits that the state of Michigan brought against the book's distributors. Eventually the case was brought before the United States Supreme Court, which ruled in the distributors' favor.

Like *The Devil Rides Outside*, *Nuni* is largely autobiographical. This novel stems from Griffin's experiences in the South Pacific during World War II and his observations of the islanders' culture. In *Nuni*, the protagonist learns the language, legends, rites, and norms of the natives and attempts to instil Western values in them. While critics found Griffin's stream-of-consciousness technique and use of the present tense confusing, they also recognized the novel's importance as a sociological account of life among the Pacific aborigines. Some commentators also argued that *Nuni* might have been more effective if presented as an anthropological study rather than as a piece of fiction.

Black Like Me

Black Like Me is Griffin's most famous and controversial book. In this work, Griffin describes his travels in New Orleans, Mississippi, Alabama, and Georgia, during which the simplest tasks of obtaining food and lodging became obstacles. Under the Jim Crow laws, blacks were treated as second-class citizens who were often legally prevented from voting; restricted to the "colored" sections of towns, restaurants, trains, and buses; and denied employment and entrance to social institutions and educational facilities. More devastating and humiliating, however, was the way in which Griffin was treated by the white people he encountered.

Frank London Brown notes that Griffin now "met the `hate stare' [`I walked up to the ticket counter. When the lady ticket seller saw me, her otherwise attractive face turned sour, violently so.']; he met neurosis in depth [`I understand you make more of an art—or maybe *hobby*—out of your sex than we do: 1; he met despair [`Suddenly I had had enough. Suddenly I could stomach no more of this degradation— not of myself but of all men who were black like me.']"

The descriptions of life in a racist society struck a nerve in many Americans, and most negative criticism came from the reading public. As a result, Griffin was hanged in

effigy, denounced, and often banned from speaking in public. Literary critics praised the book as an example of the New Journalism movement, citing the author's participation in the story; yet others found the work unbalanced and wanted either more emphasis placed on everyday experiences faced by black men and women, or more examples of Griffin's own experiences and fewer philosophical digressions.

Despite claims that the book belittled both black and white cultures, *Black Like Me* received praise for its honesty and emotional impact, and became the basis for a motion picture in 1964.

Rereading *Black Like Me* by John Howard Griffin

Fifty years after John Howard Griffin darkened his skin and travelled through the segregated US south, his record of the fear and prejudice he experienced is still resonant



A universal story ... a scene from *Black Like Me*, directed by Carl Lerner, 1964. Photograph: The Hill Top Company/Sportphoto Ltd/Allstar

Sarfraz Manzoor

Thu 27 Oct 2011 09.00 BST

<https://www.theguardian.com/books/2011/oct/27/black-like-me-john-howard-griffin>

One day in 1964 John Howard Griffin, a 44-year-old Texan journalist and novelist, was standing by the side of the road in Mississippi with a flat tyre. He saw a group of men approaching him. Griffin assumed the men were heading over to assist him but instead they dragged him away from his car and proceeded to beat him violently with chains before leaving him for dead. It took Griffin five months to recover from the assault. The attack was not random; the beating represented a particularly brutal form of literary criticism: Griffin was being punished for having written a book. *Black Like Me*, the book in question, had been published three years earlier in November 1961 and it had led to its author being both venerated and vilified. Griffin, a lantern-jawed and chestnut-haired white man, deliberately darkened his skin and spent six weeks travelling through the harshly segregated southern states of America, revisiting cities he knew intimately, in the guise of a black man. On the opening page Griffin set out the question he was attempting to answer: "What is it like to experience discrimination based on skin colour, something over which one has no control?" No white man could, he reasoned, truly understand what it was like to be black, because black people would never tell the truth to outsiders. "The only way I could see to bridge the gap between us was to become a Negro," Griffin writes. "I decided I would do this."

He visits a dermatologist who prescribes medication usually given to victims of vitiligo (a disease that causes white spots to appear on the patient's skin) and he supplements the medication with sessions under a sun-lamp and by shaving his hair and rubbing a stain into his skin. In one of the most powerful passages in the book Griffin describes the shock of seeing his new self in the mirror for the first time. "In the flood of light against white tile, the face and shoulders of a stranger," he writes, "a fierce, bald, very dark Negro glared at me from the glass. He in no way resembled me ... I had expected to see myself disguised, but this was something else. I was imprisoned in the flesh of an utter stranger, an unsympathetic one with whom I had no kinship ... I looked into the mirror and saw reflected nothing of the white John Griffin's past. No, the reflections led back to Africa, back to the shanty and the ghetto, back to the fruitless struggles against the mark of blackness."

Startled by how little of himself he recognises, Griffin sets off on his journey and is further shocked by how little he recognises of his own country: the man who shines his shoes every day does not recognise him, the restaurants he usually eats in are no longer open to him, and he has to plan ahead if he wants to use the bathroom or drink from a water fountain. White folks either treat him with extravagant politeness – when they are on the hunt for black girls or they want to inquire about his sex life – or they give him what Griffin describes as "the hate stare". "Nothing can describe the withering horror of this," he writes, "you feel lost, sick at heart before such unmasked hatred, not so much because it threatens you as because it shows humans in such an inhuman light. You see a kind of insanity, something so obscene the very obscenity of it terrifies you. I felt like saying 'What in God's name are you doing to yourself?'" Being exposed to the hate stare, witnessing racism from the other side, leaves Griffin sad and angry; he grieves at how "my own people could give the hate stare, could shrivel men's souls, could deprive humans of rights they unhesitatingly accord their livestock". He concludes that "the Negro is treated not even as a second-class citizen but as a tenth-class one."

Griffin's outrage at this injustice was rooted in his own life. He was studying in France at the outbreak of the second world war and joined the French resistance, helping to smuggle Jewish children to Britain. Having witnessed the consequences of racism against Jews he became more sensitive to the plight of black people in America. Griffin had been temporarily blinded during the war after being blasted with shrapnel. He recovered his sight two years before embarking on the journey he described in *Black Like Me*, and the book can be read as a reaction to the lessons he learnt while sightless. "The blind," he would later write, "can only see the heart and intelligence of a man, and nothing in these things indicates in the slightest whether a man is white or black." *Black Like Me* was Griffin's effort to persuade America to open its eyes. The first extracts from the book were published by Sepia magazine, and immediately he found himself the target of hostile attention. He received death threats, and an effigy of him was hung in Dallas, his home town, prompting Griffin and his family to go into exile in Mexico, where he did further work on the book. When it was published, he criss-crossed the country delivering lectures on his experiences; *Black Like Me* was translated into 14 languages, sold more than 10m copies, was adapted into a film and is still taught in schools and colleges across the US.

I was 16 years old and in college when I first read *Black Like Me*. I can vividly recall the impact it made on me: as an Asian teenager growing up in the 1980s I felt like a second-class citizen. There wasn't any literature that I had come across that spoke directly to my experience and so I embraced the literature of black America. I read the speeches of [Martin Luther King](#), [Richard Wright's](#) *Native Son* and [Ralph Ellison's](#) *Invisible Man*, but *Black Like Me* struck an especially powerful chord partly because of Griffin's rage at the injustice of racism. In my own case, *Black Like Me* was not prophetic. Does it have any relevance 50 years after it was published?

Today the idea of a white man darkening his skin to speak on behalf of black people might appear patronising, offensive and even a little comical. Griffin felt that by blacking up he had "tampered with the mystery of existence", which sounded profound when I read it at 16, but now seems typical of Griffin's rather portentous prose, which occasionally makes one doubt the credibility of what he is describing. Would the doctor who administered the medication really have told him, on shaking his hand and waving him goodbye, "now you go into oblivion"? Later Griffin notes that when he sits down to write to his wife, he finds he is unable to do so: "The observing self," he recalled, "saw the Negro write 'Darling' to a white woman. The chains of my blackness would not allow me to go on." This, to me, lacks plausibility. Other questions emerge in the rereading: how is it that a 39-year-old white man can pass himself as black simply by darkening his skin and shaving his hair? Did no one notice his Caucasian features and become sceptical of the white man with weirdly dark skin? It is also striking how confidently Griffin seems able to inhabit the black mindset and speak for all black men, within, it seems, only days of starting his journey. Despite these misgivings, *Black Like Me* remains for me a brutal record of the indignities suffered by blacks in segregated America; it is also a reminder of how, in some respects, things have progressed.

Three months before its publication, [Barack Obama](#) was born in Hawaii. It is fascinating to speculate on Griffin's response had he been told, while on his odyssey through the segregated south, that a baby boy born to a Kenyan man would within 50 years be president of the United States. Obama's occupancy of the White House is, one could argue, emphatic proof that the world depicted in *Black Like Me* is history.

Obama's mother was white – but he made an explicit decision, which he describes in his memoir *Dreams From My Father*, to embrace a black identity. This self-conscious immersion into blackness led him to move to Chicago, to become active in the church, to familiarise himself with the canon of black literature and the civil rights movement so that he could claim his presidential hopes represented the fulfilment of the civil rights dream. Obama's case is of course different to Griffin's, but in one sense he, too, was not born black – he became black.

The similarities between Obama and Griffin are not, however, the primary reason why *Black Like Me* still speaks to us from a distance of 50 years; it resonates because its true topic is not race but humanity. Today in the US and elsewhere, Muslims have replaced blacks as the minority who are demonised, stereotyped and dehumanised. "To be a Muslim in America now is to endure slings and arrows against your faith," a recent cover story in Time magazine declared, "not just in the schoolyard and the office but also outside your place of worship and in the public square, where some of the country's most powerful mainstream religious and political leaders unthinkingly (or worse, deliberately) conflate Islam with terrorism and savagery."

Look at the footage of the protests against the inaccurately dubbed "Ground Zero mosque" – the expressions on the faces of the protesters seem eerily familiar. The footage may be in colour, but it brings to mind grainy black and white archive film of protests against integration. The hate stare, described so starkly by Griffin, scarred the faces of these protesters. There is a man with a black father in the White House, but there is also another black man, Herman Cain, who is seeking the Republican nomination to become the next president, who has said that any Muslim serving in his administration would be forced to take a loyalty test.

"The Negro. The South. These are details," Griffin wrote in his preface. "The real story is the universal story – one of men who destroy the souls of other men. It is the story of the persecuted, the defrauded, the feared and detested." As long as one group persecutes, fears and detests another, *Black Like Me* will, sadly, remain essential reading.

Black Like Me: 50th Anniversary Edition is published by Wings Press (£15.93).

Black Like Me may be read (free) at Archive.org:

<https://archive.org/details/blacklikeme1961grif>

Race in John Howard Griffin's Black like me may be read (free) at Archive.org:

<https://archive.org/details/raceinjohnhoward0000unse/page/n147/mode/2up>

Black Like Me by John Howard Griffin

His effigy was strung up from the traffic light on Main Street. A cross was burned on the lawn of the black church near his house. He received death threats and was denounced as a traitor to the white race.

Turning off all the lights, I went into the bathroom and closed the door. I stood in the darkness before the mirror, my hand on the light switch. I forced myself to flick it on.

In the flood of light against white tile, the face and shoulders of a stranger—a fierce, bald, very dark Negro—glared at me from the glass. He in no way resembled me.

The transformation was total and shocking. I had expected to see myself disguised, but this was something else. I was imprisoned in the flesh of an utter stranger, an unsympathetic one with whom I felt no kinship. All traces of the John Griffin I had been were wiped from existence.

"Black Like Me is a moving and troubling book written by an accomplished novelist. It is a scathing indictment of our society."—Saturday Review

Preface

This may not be all of it. It may not cover all the questions, but it is what it is like to be a Negro in a land where we keep the Negro down.

Some whites will say this is not really it. They will say this is the white man's experience as a Negro in the South, not the Negro's.

But this is picayunish, and we no longer have time for that. We no longer have time to atomize principles and beg the question. We fill too many gutters while we argue unimportant points and confuse issues.

The Negro. The South. These are details. The real story is the universal one of men who destroy the souls and bodies of other men (and in the process destroy themselves) for reasons neither really understands. It is the story of the persecuted, the defrauded, the feared and detested. I could have been a Jew in Germany, a Mexican in a number of states, or a member of any "inferior" group. Only the details would have differed. The story would be the same.

This began as a scientific research study of the Negro in the South, with careful compilation of data for analysis. But I filed the data, and here publish the journal of my own experience living as a Negro. I offer it in all its crudity and rawness. It traces the changes that occur to heart and body and intelligence when a so-called first-class citizen is cast on the junkheap of second-class citizenship.

J.H.G.

October 28, 1959

For years the idea had haunted me, and that night it returned more insistently than ever.

If a white man became a Negro in the Deep South, what adjustments would he have to make? What is it like to experience discrimination based on skin color, something over which one has no control?

This speculation was sparked again by a report that lay on my desk in the old barn that served as my office. The report mentioned the rise in suicide tendency among Southern Negroes. This did not mean that they killed themselves, but rather that they had reached a stage where they simply no longer cared whether they lived or died.

It was that bad, then, despite the white Southern legislators who insisted that they had a "wonderfully harmonious relationship" with Negroes. I lingered on in my office at my parents' Mansfield, Texas, farm. My wife and children slept in our home five miles away. I sat there, surrounded by the smells of autumn coming through my open window, unable to leave, unable to sleep.

How else except by becoming a Negro could a white man hope to learn the truth? Though we lived side by side throughout the South, communication between the two races had simply ceased to exist. Neither really knew what went on with those of the other race. The Southern Negro will not tell the white man the truth. He long ago learned that if he speaks a truth unpleasing to the white, the white will make life miserable for him.

The only way I could see to bridge the gap between us was to become a Negro. I decided I would do this.

I prepared to walk into a life that appeared suddenly mysterious and frightening. With my decision to become a Negro I realized that I, a specialist in race issues, really knew nothing of the Negro's real problem.

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When I went out that morning the face of the Negro populace was glum and angry.

At the shoe stand, Sterling did not give his usual cordial greeting. His eyes looked yellower than usual. "You heard?" he asked.

"No ... I haven't heard anything .. "

He told me the Mississippi jury refused to indict in the Parker lynch case. The news had spread over the quarter like a wave of acid. Everyone talked of it. Not since I was in Europe, when the Russo-German Pact of 1939 was signed, had I seen news spread such bitterness and despair.

Sterling handed me this morning's issue of The Louisiana Weekly, a Negro newspaper. The editorial page condemned the jury's actions.

If there was any doubt as to how "Southern Justice" operates in the State of Mississippi, it was completely dispelled . . . when the Pearl River County Grand Jury failed to return any indictments or even consider the massive information compiled by the FBI in the sensational Mack Parker kidnap-lynch murder case. . . . The axiom that a man is innocent until proved guilty by a court of law has been flagrantly ignored once again in the State of Mississippi. The fact that an accused man was deprived of a fair trial, kidnapped and murdered by a lynch mob from a Mississippi jail apparently had no effect on the thinking of the Grand Jury. The silent treatment merely gave approval of the mob taking the law into its hands. Mississippi has long had a reputation of failing to punish white men accused of criminal acts against Negroes. This is Mississippi's peculiar way of making Negroes "happy and contented" with the democratic processes and of showing the world how well they care for the Negro in respecting his rights as an American citizen.

The point that crushed most was that the FBI had supplied a dossier of evidence identifying the lynchers, and the Pearl River County Grand Jury had decided not to look inside it.

I handed the paper back to Sterling. In a voice heavy with anger he held it at arm's length and read: "The calculated lack of respect for law and order in Mississippi has made it a veritable jungle of intimidation, terrorism and brutality where only the fittest survive. Further, it has shamed the United States in the eyes of the world and added to the

shame of the South, already experiencing strained, tense and explosive race relations because white supremacy mob rule substitutes too often for democracy... "

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In the bus station lobby, I looked for signs indicating a colored waiting room, but saw none. I walked up to the ticket counter. When the lady ticket-seller saw me, her otherwise attractive face turned sour, violently so. This look was so unexpected and so unprovoked I was taken aback.

"What do you want?" she snapped.

Taking care to pitch my voice to politeness, I asked about the next bus to Hattiesburg.

She answered rudely and glared at me with such loathing I knew I was receiving what the Negroes call "the hate stare" It was my first experience with it. It is far more than the look of disapproval one occasionally gets. This was so exaggeratedly hateful I would have been amused if I had not been so surprised.

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With almost an hour before bus departure, I turned away and looked for a place to sit. The large, handsome room was almost empty. No other Negro was there, and I dared not take a seat unless I saw some other Negro also seated.

Once again a "hate stare" drew my attention like a magnet. It came from a middle-aged, heavysset, well-dressed white man. He sat a few yards away, fixing his eyes on me. Nothing can describe the withering horror of this. You feel lost, sick at heart before such unmasked hatred, not so much because it threatens you as because it shows humans in such an inhuman light. You see a kind of insanity, something so obscene the very obscenity of it (rather than its threat) terrifies you. It was so new I could not take my eyes from the man's face. I felt like saying: "What in God's name are you doing to yourself?"

A Negro porter sidled over to me. I glimpsed his white coat and turned to him. His glance met mine and communicated the sorrow, the understanding.

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They called the bus. We filed out into the high-roofed garage and stood in line, the Negroes to the rear, the whites to the front. Buses idled their motors, filling the air with a stifling odor of exhaust fumes. An army officer hurried to get at the rear of the white line. I stepped back to let him get in front. He refused and went to the end of the colored portion of the line. Every Negro craned his head to look at the phenomenon. I have learned that men in uniform, particularly officers, rarely descend to show discrimination, perhaps because of the integration of the armed forces.

We sweated through our clothes and I was ready to leave and try for a later bus when they allowed us to board. Though nominally segregation is not permitted on interstate buses, no Negro would be fool enough to try to sit anywhere except at the rear on one going into Mississippi. I occupied a seat to myself not far from the back. Muffled conversations sprang up around me.

"Well, here we go into Mississippi—the most lied-about state in the union—that's what they claim," a man behind me said.

"It's the truth, too," another said. "Only it's Mississippi that does all the lying."

"People come down here and say Mississippi is the worst place in the world," Bill said. "But we can't all live in the North"

"Of course not. And it looks like beautiful country," I said, glancing out at giant pine trees.

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Seeing that I was friendly, he offered advice. "If you're not used to things in Mississippi, you'll have to watch yourself pretty close till you catch on," he said. The others, hearing, nodded agreement.

I told him I did not know what to watch out for.

"Well, you know you don't want to even look at a white woman. In fact, you look down at the ground or the other way."

A large, pleasant Negro woman smiled at me across the aisle. "They're awful touchy on that here. You may not even know you're looking in a white woman's direction, but they'll try to make something out of it," she said.

"If you pass by a picture show, and they've got women on the posters outside, don't look at them either."

"Is it that bad?"

He assured me it was. Another man said: "Somebody's sure to say, 'Hey, boy—what are you looking at that white gal like that for?' "

I remembered the woman on the bus in New Orleans using almost the same expression.

"And you dress pretty well," Bill continued, his heavy black face frowning in concentration. "If you walk past an alley, walk out in the middle of the street. Plenty of people here, white and colored, would knock you in the head if they thought you had money on you. If white boys holler at you, just keep walking. Don't let them stop you and start asking you questions."

I told him I appreciated his warning.

"Can you all think of anything else?" he asked the others.

"That covers it," one of them said.

I thanked him for telling me these things.

"Well, if I was to come to your part of the country, I'd want somebody to tell me," Bill said.

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"Looks awful wild down here," I said as I paid him. I had to speak loudly to make him hear me above the shouts and the amplified wails of jukebox rock-and-roll music.

"If you don't know the quarter, you'd better get inside somewhere as soon as you can," he said.

My contact inside referred me to another person in the quarter. As I walked down Mobile Street, a car full of white men and boys sped past. They yelled obscenities at me. A satsuma (tangerine) flew past my head and broke against a building. The street was loud and raw, with tension as thick as fog.

I felt the insane terror of it. When I entered the store of my second contact, we talked in low voices, though he made no effort to be guarded or cautious in expressing his contempt for the brutes who made forays into the area.

"The sonsabitches beat one boy to a pulp. He was alone on a stretch of walk. They jumped out of the car, tore him up and were gone before anyone knew what was happening," he said. "They framed another on a trumped-up charge of carrying whisky in his car. He's one of the finest boys in town. Never drinks."

His bitterness was so great I knew I would be thought a spy for the whites if I divulged my identity.

Another car roared down the street, and the street was suddenly deserted, but the Negroes appeared again.

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I heard my voice, as though it belonged to someone else, hollow in the empty room, detached, say: "Nigger, what you standing up there crying for?"

I saw tears slick on his cheeks in the yellow light. Then I heard myself say what I have heard them say so many times. "It's not right. It's just not right."

Then the onrush of revulsion, the momentary flash of blind hatred against the whites who were somehow responsible for all of this, the old bewilderment of wondering, "Why do they do it? Why do they keep us like this? What are they gaining? What evil has taken them?" (The Negroes say, "What sickness has taken them?") My revulsion turned to grief that my own people could give the hate stare, could shrivel men's souls, could deprive humans of rights they unhesitatingly accord their livestock.

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He asked P. D. how the voting situation was in Mississippi and P. D. told the story of the Negro who went to register. The white man taking his application gave him the standard literacy tests:

"What is the first line of the thirty-second paragraph of the United States Constitution?" he asked. The applicant answered perfectly.

"Name the eleventh President of the United States and his entire cabinet."

The applicant answered correctly.

Finally, unable to trip him up, the white man asked, "Can you read and write?"

The applicant wrote his name and was then handed a newspaper in Chinese to test his reading. He studied it carefully for a time.

"Well, can you read it?"

"I can read the headline, but I can't make out the body text"

Incredulous, the white man said: "You can read that headline?"

"Oh, yes, I've got the meaning all right."

"What's it say?"

"It says this is one Negro in Mississippi who's not going to get to vote this year."

The small room was perfectly clean except for a placard attached to the back of the door. I read the neatly typed NOTICE! until I saw that it was only another list of prices a white man would pay for various types of sensuality with various ages of Negro girls. The whites frequently walk into colored rest rooms, Scotch-tape these notices to the

wall. This man offered his services free to any Negro woman over twenty, offered to pay, on an ascending scale, from two dollars for a nineteen-year-old girl up to seven fifty for a fourteen-year-old and more for perversion dates. He gave a contact point for later in the evening and urged any Negro man who wanted to earn five dollars for himself to find him a date within this price category. He would probably have success, I thought, glancing at the butt of bread. To a man who had nothing to eat but bread and perhaps a piece of cheese in a public rest room, five dollars could mean a great deal. I wondered about the Negro who had left this trace of his passing. What sort of man was he? A derelict? No, a derelict would have left an empty wine bottle. Someone who could not find work and had grown too hungry to wait for something better? Probably. If the woman in the Catholic Book Store had not cashed my traveler's check, I might have been reduced to the same thing. What astonished me was that he had not carried the remains of the bread with him. Perhaps he, too, had seen the notice on the door and counted on five dollars for a decent supper.

A young man entered as I dried my hands. He nodded politely, with a quick, intelligent expression, glanced at the notice and snorted with amusement and derision. In these matters, the Negro has seen the backside of the white man too long to be shocked. He feels an indulgent superiority whenever he sees these evidences of the white man's frailty. This is one of the sources of his chafing at being considered inferior. He cannot understand how the white man can show the most demeaning aspects of his nature and at the same time delude himself into thinking he is inherently superior. To the Negro who sees this element of the white man's nature—and he sees it much more often than any other—the white man's comments about the Negro's alleged "immorality" ring maddeningly hollow.

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Later we talked about the South. He had sent two sons away to study law. They would never return. "If I could have foreseen ten years ago how things would happen, I've have cleared out too. I'm too old now. And besides, I've got my daughters and grandchildren here."

"But surely your sons will come back to see you."

"I don't want them to. They'll come back for my funeral. That's the worst part of this devilment. If the young ones want a decent life, they've got to go somewhere else. All the families are being split up. That's the shame of it."

We spoke of the whites. "They're God's children, just like us," he said. "Even if they don't act very godlike anymore. God tells us straight—we've got to love them, no ifs, ands, and buts about it. Why, if we hated them, we'd be sunk down to their level. There's plenty of us doing just that, too."

"A lot of the people I've talked to think we've turned the other cheek too long," I said.

"You can't get around what's right, though," he said. "When we stop loving them, that's when they win." "How's that?"

"Then they'll have ruined our race for sure. They'll have dragged us down plumb to the bottom."

"Are you just supposed to let them carry on then?"

"No ... we can't do that any longer. We're supposed to get our rights in a proper way. And try to understand that it's hard for them, too, to change around from the old ways. We've got plenty of old Uncle Toms that don't want things changed any more than the whites. You can give them two dollars and they'll pull the string that sends us all to hell. They're a disgrace to our race. And then we've got plenty of young smart-aleck people that don't want nothing except the chance to 'get even' with the whites ... they're full of hate and piss and it's a God's shame. They're just as much Judases as the Uncle Toms."

As always, the conversation stalemated with "None of it really makes any sense."

No, it makes no sense, but insofar as the Negro is concerned, nothing makes much sense. This was brought home to me in another realm many times when I sought jobs.

The foreman of one plant in Mobile, a large brute, allowed me to tell him what I could do. Then he looked me in the face and spoke to me in these words:

"No, you couldn't get anything like that here"

His voice was not unkind. It was the dead voice one often hears. Determined to see if I could break in somehow, I said: "But if I could do you a better job, and you paid me less than a white man ..."

"I'll tell you ... we don't want you people. Don't you understand that?"

"I know," I said with real sadness. "You can't blame a man for trying at least."

"No use trying down here," he said. "We're gradually getting you people weeded out from the better jobs at this plant. We're taking it slow, but we're doing it. Pretty soon we'll have it so the only jobs you can get here are the ones no white man would have"

"How can we live?" I asked hopelessly, careful not to give the impression I was arguing.

"That's the whole point," he said, looking me square in the eyes, but with some faint sympathy, as though he regretted the need to say what followed: "We're going to do our damndest to drive every one of you out of the state"

Despite his frankness and the harshness of his intentions, I nevertheless had the impression he was telling me: "I'm sorry. I've got nothing against you personally, but you're colored, and with all this noise about equality, we just don't want you people around. The only way we can keep you out of our schools and cafés is to make life so hard for you that you'll get the hell out before equality comes"

This attitude cropped up often. Many otherwise decent men and women could find no other solution. They are willing to degrade themselves to their basest levels to prevent the traditional laborer from rising in status or, to put it bluntly, from "winning," even though what he wins has been rightfully his from the moment he was born into the human race.

I walked through the streets of Mobile throughout the afternoons. I had known the city before, in my youth, when I sailed from there once to France. I knew it then as a privileged white. It had impressed me as a beautiful Southern port town, gracious and calm. I had seen the Negro dockworkers stripped to the waist, their bodies glistening with sweat under their loads. The sight had chilled me, touched me to pity for men who so resembled beasts of burden. But I had dismissed it as belonging to the natural order of things. The Southern whites I knew were kind and wise. If they allowed this, then surely it must be right.

Now, walking the same streets as a Negro, I found no trace of the Mobile I formerly knew, nothing familiar. The laborers still dragged out their oxlike lives, but the gracious Southerner, the wise Southerner, the kind Southerner was nowhere visible. I knew that if I were white, I would find him easily, for his other face is there for whites to see. It is not a false face; it is simply different from the one the Negro sees. The Negro sees him as a man with muscular emotions who wants to drive out all of his race except the beasts of burden.

I concluded that, as in everything else, the atmosphere of a place is entirely different for Negro and white. The Negro sees and reacts differently not because he is Negro, but because he is suppressed. Fear dims even the sunlight.

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I hitchhiked up toward the swamp country between Mobile and Montgomery. A magnificent cool day.

I walked some miles before a large, pleasant-faced man halted his light truck and told me to get in. When I opened the door I saw a shotgun propped against the seat next to his knee. I recalled it was considered sport among some elements in Alabama to hunt "figs" and I backed away.

"Come on," he laughed. "That's for hunting deer." I glanced again at his florid face, saw he looked decent and climbed into the leather seat beside him.

"Do you have any luck getting rides through here?" he asked.

"No, sir. You're my first ride since Mobile."

I learned he was a married man, fifty-three years old, father of a family now grown and grandfather of two children. He was certainly, by the tone of his conversation, an active civic leader and respected member of his community. I began to hope that I had encountered a decent white.

"You married?" he asked.

"Yes, sir."

"Any kids?"

"Yes, sir—three."

"You got a pretty wife?"

"Yes, sir."

He waited a moment and then with lightness, paternal amusement, "She ever had it from a white man?"

I stared at my black hands, saw the gold wedding band and mumbled something meaningless, hoping he would see my reticence. He overrode my feelings and

the conversation grew more salacious. He told me how all of the white men in the region craved colored girls. He said he hired a lot of them both for housework and in his business. "And I guarantee you, I've had it in every one of them before they ever got on the payroll." A pause. Silence above humming tires on the hot-top road. "What do you think of that?"

"Surely some refuse," I suggested cautiously.

"Not if they want to eat—or feed their kids," he snorted. "If they don't put out, they don't get the job"

I looked out the window to tall pine trees rising on either side of the highway. Their turpentine odor mingled with the soaped smells of the man's khaki hunting clothes.

"You think that's pretty terrible, don't you?" he asked.

I knew I should grin and say, "Why no—it's just nature," or some other disarming remark to avoid provoking him.

"Don't you?" he insisted pleasantly.

"I guess I do."

"Why hell—everybody does it. Don't you know that?"

"No, sir."

"Well, they sure as hell do. We figure we're doing you people a favor to get some white blood in your kids."

The grotesque hypocrisy slapped me as it does all Negroes. It is worth remembering when the white man talks of the Negro's lack of sexual morality, or when he speaks with horror about mongrelization and with fervor about racial purity. Mongrelization is already a widespread reality in the South—it has been exclusively the white man's contribution to the Southern Way of Life. His vast concern for "racial purity" obviously does not extend to all races.'

('Later I encountered many whites who freely admitted the same practices my companion described. In fairness, however, other Southern whites roundly condemned it and claimed it was not as typical as my informants suggested. None denied that it was widespread.)

This aspect of Southern life does not hit the newspapers because, as my companion said, "Alabama nigger women are good about that—they won't never go to the cops or tell on you"

It was obvious what would happen if one of them tried it.

As I feared it would, my lack of "cooperation" nettled the driver. He took my silence, rightly, for disapproval.

"Where you from?" he asked.

"Texas."

"What're you doing down here?"

"Just traveling around, trying to find jobs."

"You're not down here to stir up trouble, are you?"

"Ohgodno"

"You start stirring up these niggers and we sure as hell know how to take care of you."

"I don't intend to."

"Do you know what we do to troublemakers down here?"

"No, sir."

"We either ship them off to the pen or kill them."

He spoke in a tone that sickened me, casual, merciless. I looked at him. His decent blue eyes turned yellow. I knew that nothing could touch him to have mercy once he decided a Negro should be "taught a lesson." The immensity of it terrified me. But it caught him up like a lust now. He entertained it, his voice unctuous with pleasure and cruelty. The highway stretched deserted through the swamp forests. He nodded toward the solid wall of brush flying past our windows.

"You can kill a nigger and toss him into that swamp and no one'll ever know what happened to him."

"Yes, sir ..."

I forced myself to silence, forced myself to picture this man in his other roles. I saw him as he played with his grandchildren, as he stood up in church with open hymnal in hand, as he drank a cup of coffee in the morning before dressing and then shaved and talked with his wife pleasantly about nothing, as he visited with friends on the front porch Sunday afternoons. That was the man I had seen when I first got into the truck. The amiable, decent American was in all his features. This was the dark tangent in every man's belly, the sickness, the coldness, the mercilessness, the lust to cause pain or fear through self-power. Surely not even his wife or closest friends had ever seen him like this. It was a side he would show no one but his victims, or those who connived with him. The rest—what he really must be as a husband, devoted father and respected member of the community—I had to supply with my imagination. He showed me the lowest and I had to surmise the highest.

His face was set hard in an attempt to regain his equilibrium, when he pulled off the main highway and stopped on a dirt road that led into the jungle. We had engaged in a subtle battle of which I think he had only then become aware. He needed to salvage from it something. "This is where I turn off. I guess you want to stick to the highway."

I thanked him for the ride and opened the door. Before I could get out, he spoke again. "I'll tell you how it is here. We'll do business with you people. We'll sure as hell screw your women. Other than that, you're just completely off the record as far as we're concerned. And the quicker you people get that through your heads, the better off you'll be."

"Yes, sir ..." I stepped out and closed the door. He drove down the side road scattering fine gravel behind his wheels. I listened until his truck was out of hearing distance. The heavy air of evening, putrid with swamp rot, smelled fragrant. I walked across the highway, sat on my duffel and waited for another car. None came. The woods issued no sound. I felt strangely safe, isolated, alone in the stillness of dusk turning to night. First stars appeared in darkening skies still pale and the earth's heat escaped upward.

My mouth was dry and my stomach began to ache for food. I realized I had not eaten or had a drink of water all day. Cold surrounded me rapidly. I got up and began to walk along the highway in the darkness. It was better to walk than to freeze. My duffel pulled heavily at my arms and I knew I could not go far without food and rest.

I wondered at the lack of traffic on Alabama highways. No cars passed. My footsteps on the roadside gravel sloughed in echo from the wall of trees and brush.

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I walked down the highway into the darkness again, carrying both duffel bags in my left hand and feeding myself the tasteless pineapple fried pie with my right.

A distant hum behind me caught my attention. I turned to see a yellow glow on the road's horizon. It grew stronger and headlights appeared. Though I dreaded riding with another white man, I dreaded more staying on the road all night. Stepping out into full view, I waved my arms. An ancient car braked to a halt and I hurried to it. To my great relief, the reflections from the dash light showed me the face of a young Negro man.

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We discussed my problem. He said he lived back in the woods, but had six kids and only two rooms. He wouldn't even have a bed to offer me. I asked him about some other house in the area where I might rent a bed. He said there were none any better than what he had to offer.

However, we could find no other solution.

"You can't stand out here all night. If you don't mind sleeping on the floor, you're welcome to come with me," he said finally.

"I don't mind sleeping on the floor," I said. "I just wouldn't want to put you to any trouble."

As we drove several miles down a lane into the forest, he told me he was a sawmill worker and never made quite enough to get out from under his debts. Always, when he took his check to the store, he owed a little more than the check could cover. He said it was the same for everyone else; and indeed I have seen the pattern throughout my travels. Part of the Southern white's strategy is to get the Negro in debt and keep him there.

"It makes it hard, doesn't it?" I said.

"Yeah, but you can't stop," he answered quickly. "That's what I tell the men at the mill. Some of them are willing just to sit there. I told them, 'Okay, so you're going to give up just because you get no butter with your bread. That's no way to act. Go ahead and eat the bread—but work, and maybe someday we'll have butter to go with it.' I tell them we sure ain't going to get it any other way."

I asked him if he could not get together with some of the others and strike for better wages. He laughed with real amusement.

"Do you know how long we'd last, doing something like that?"

"Well, if you stuck together, they sure couldn't kill you all."

"They could damn sure try," he snorted. "Anyway, how long could I feed my kids? There's only a couple of stores in twenty miles. They'd cut off credit and refuse to sell to us. Without money coming in, none of us could live."

He turned off the lane into a rutted path that led through dense underbrush up to a knoll. The headlights fell on a shanty of unpainted wood, patched at the bottom with a rusting Dr. Pepper sign. Except for the voices of children, a deep silence hung over the place. The man's wife came to the door and stood silhouetted against the pale light of a kerosene lamp. He introduced us. Though she appeared embarrassed, she asked me in.

The subdued babble of children mounted to excited shouts of welcome. They ranged in age from nine years to four months. They were overjoyed to have company. It must be a party. We decided it was.

Supper was on the makeshift table. It consisted entirely of large yellow beans cooked in water. The mother prepared mashed beans and canned milk for the infant. I remembered the bread and offered it as my contribution to the meal. Neither parent apologized for the meagreness of the food. We served ourselves on plastic dishes from the table and sat where we could find places, the children on the floor with a spread-out newspaper for a tablecloth.

I congratulated them on such a fine family. The mother told me they had been truly blessed. "Ours are all in good health. When you think of so many people with crippled or blind or not-right children, you just have to thank God." I praised the children until the father's tired face animated with pride. He looked at the children the way another looks at some rare painting or treasured gem.

Closed into the two rooms, with only the soft light of two kerosene lamps, the atmosphere changed. The outside world, outside standards disappeared. They were somewhere beyond in the vast darkness. In here, we had all we needed for gaiety. We had shelter, some food in our bellies, the bodies and eyes and affections of children who were not yet aware of how things were. And we had treats. We cut the Milky Way bars into thin slices for dessert. In a framework of nothing, slices of Milky Way become a great gift. With almost rabid delight, the children consumed them. One of the smaller girls salivated so heavily the chocolate dribbled syrup-like from the corner of her mouth. Her mother wiped it off with her fingertip and unconsciously (from what yearning?) put it in her own mouth.

After supper, I went outside with my host to help him carry water from a makeshift boarded well. A near

full moon shone above the trees and chill penetrated as though brilliance strengthened it. We picked our way carefully through fear of snakes down a faint footpath to the edge of the trees to urinate. The moon-speckled landscape exhaled its night rustlings, its truffle-odor of swamps. Distantly the baby cried. I listened to the muffled rattle of our waters against damp leaf loam. A fragment of memory returned—recollection of myself as a youngster reading Lillian Smith's *Strange Fruit*, her description of the Negro boy stopping along a lonely path to urinate. Now, years later, I was there in a role foreign to my youth's wildest imaginings. I felt more profoundly than ever before the totality of my Negro-ness, the immensity of its isolating effects. The transition was complete from the white boy reading a book about Negroes in the safety of his white living room to an old Negro man in the Alabama swamps, his existence nullified by men but reaffirmed by nature, in his functions, in his affection.

"Okay?" my friend said as we turned back. Moonlight caught his protruding cheekbones and cast the hollows beneath into shadow.

"Okay," I said.

The house stood above us, rickety, a faint light at the windows. I could hear the whites say, "Look at that shanty. They live like animals. If they wanted to do better they could. And they expect us just to accept them? They like to live this way. It would make them just as miserable to demand a higher standard of living as it would make us miserable to put us down to that standard."

I mentioned this to my host. "But we can't do any better," he said. "We work just for that ... to have something a little better for the kids and us"

"Your wife doesn't seem to get down in the dumps," I remarked.

"No—she's good all the way through. I'll tell you—if we don't have meat to cook with the beans, why she just goes ahead and cooks the beans anyhow." He said this last with a flourish that indicated the grandness of her attitude.

We placed buckets of water on the cast-iron wood stove in the kitchen so we could have warm water for washing and shaving. Then we returned outside to fill the wood-box.

"Are there really a lot of alligators in these swamps?" I asked.

"Oh God yes, the place is alive with them."

"Why don't you kill some of them? The tails make good meat. I could show you how. We learned in jungle training when I was in the army."

"Oh, we can't do that," he said. "They stick a hundred-dollar fine on you for killing a gator. I'm telling you," he laughed sourly, "they got all the loopholes plugged. There ain't a way you can win in this state."

"But what about the children?" I asked. "Aren't you afraid the gators might eat one of them?"

"No ..." he said forlornly, "the gators like turtle better than they do us."

"They must be part white," I heard myself say.

His laughter sounded flat in the cold air. "As long as they keep their bellies full with turtles, they're no danger to us. Anyway, we keep the kids close to the house."

The cheerful and fretful noises of children being readied for bed drifted to us as we returned to the kitchen. Physical modesty in such cramped quarters

('The fine for killing alligators appears to be a conservation measure and means of controlling turtles, not a punitive action against the Negroes, though few Negroes realize this.)

was impossible, indeed in such a context it would have been ridiculous. The mother sponge-bathed the children while the husband and I shaved. Each of the children went to the toilet, a zinc bucket in the corner, since it was too cold for them to go outside.

Their courtesy to me was exquisite. While we spread tow sacks on the floor and then feed sacks over them, the children asked questions about my own children. Did they go to school? No, they were too young. How old were they then? Why, today is my daughter's fifth birthday. Would she have a party? Yes, she'd certainly had a party. Excitement. Like we had here, with the candy and everything? Yes, something like that.

But it was time to go to bed, time to stop asking questions. The magic remained for them, almost unbearable to me—the magic of children thrilled to know my daughter had a party. The parents brought in patch-work quilts from under the bed in the other room and spread them over the pallets. The children kissed their parents and then wanted to kiss Mr. Griffin. I sat down on a straight-back kitchen chair and held out my arms. One by one they came, smelling of soap and childhood. One by one they put their arms around my neck and touched their lips to mine. One by one they said and giggled soberly, "Good night, Mr. Griffin."

I stepped over them to go to my pallet near the kitchen door and lay down fully dressed. Warning the children he did not want to hear another word from them, the father picked up the kerosene lamp and carried it into the bedroom. Through the doorless opening I saw light flicker on the walls. Neither of them spoke. I heard the sounds of undressing. The lamp was blown out and a moment later their bedsprings creaked.

Fatigue spread through me, making me grateful for the tow-sack bed. I fought back glimpses of my daughter's birthday party in its cruel contrasts to our party here tonight.

"If you need anything, Mr. Griffin, just holler," the man said.

"Thank you. I will. Good night."

"Good night," the children said, their voices locating them in the darkness.

"Good night," again.

"Good night, Mr. Griffin."

"That's enough," the father called out warningly to them.

I lay there watching moonlight pour through the crack of the ill-fitting door as everyone drifted to sleep. Mosquitoes droned loudly until the room was a great hum. I wondered that they should be out on such a cold night. The children jerked in their sleep and I knew they had been bitten. The stove cooled gradually with almost imperceptible interior pops and puffings. Odors of the night and autumn and the swamp entered to mingle with the inside odors of children, kerosene, cold beans, urine and the dead incense of pine ashes. The rots and the freshness combined into a strange fragrance—the smell of poverty. For a moment I knew the intimate and subtle joys of misery.

And yet misery was the burden, the pervading, killing burden. I understood why they had so many children. These moments of night when the swamp and darkness surrounded them evoked an immense loneliness, a dread, a sense of exile from the rest of humanity. When the awareness of it strikes, a man either suffocates with despair or he turns to cling to his woman, to console and seek consolation. Their union is momentary escape from the swamp night, from utter hopelessness of its ever getting better for them. It is an ultimately tragic act wherein the hopeless seek hope.

Thinking about these things, the bravery of these people attempting to bring up a family decently, their gratitude that none of their children were blind or maimed, their willingness to share their food and shelter with a stranger—the whole thing overwhelmed me. I got up from bed, half-frozen anyway, and stepped outside.

A thin fog blurred the moon. Trees rose as ghostly masses in the diffused light. I sat on an inverted washtub and trembled as its metallic coldness seeped through my pants.

I thought of my daughter, Susie, and of her fifth birthday today, the candles, the cake and party dress;

and of my sons in their best suits. They slept now in clean beds in a warm house while their father, a bald-headed old Negro, sat in the swamps and wept, holding it in so he would not awaken the Negro children.

I felt again the Negro children's lips soft against mine, so like the feel of my own children's good-night kisses. I saw again their large eyes, guileless, not yet aware that doors into wonderlands of security, opportunity and hope were closed to them.

It was thrown in my face. I saw it not as a white man and not as a Negro, but as a human parent. Their children resembled mine in all ways except the superficial one of skin color, as indeed they resembled all children of all humans. Yet this accident, this least important of all qualities, the skin pigment, marked them for inferior status. It became fully terrifying when I realized that if my skin were permanently black, they would unhesitatingly consign my own children to this bleak future.

One can scarcely conceive the full horror of it unless one is a parent who takes a close look at his children and then asks himself how he would feel if a group of men should come to his door and tell him they had decided—for reasons of convenience to them—that his children's lives would henceforth be restricted, their world smaller, their educational opportunities less, their future mutilated.

One would then see it as the Negro parent sees it, for this is precisely what happens. He looks at his children and knows. No one, not even a saint, can live without a sense of personal value. The white racist has masterfully defrauded the Negro of this sense. It is the least obvious but most heinous of all race crimes, for it kills the spirit and the will to live.

It was too much. Though I was experiencing it, I could not believe it. Surely in America a whole segment of decent souls could not stand by and allow such massive crimes to be committed. I tried to see the whites' side as I have all along. I have studied objectively the anthropological arguments, the accepted clichés about cultural and ethnic differences. And I have found their application simply untrue. The two great arguments—the Negro's lack of sexual morality and his intellectual incapacity—are smoke screens to justify prejudice and unethical behavior. Recent scientific studies, published in *The Eighth Generation* (Harper & Brothers, New York), show that the contemporary middle-class Negro has the same family cult, the same ideals and goals as his white counterpart. The Negro's lower scholastic showing springs not from racial default, but from being deprived of cultural and educational advantages by the whites. When the segregationist argues that the Negro is scholastically inferior, he presents the most eloquent possible argument for desegregated schools; he admits that so long as the Negro is kept in tenth-rate schools he will remain scholastically behind white children.

I have held no brief for the Negro. I have looked diligently for all aspects of "inferiority" among them and I cannot find them. All the cherished question-begging epithets applied to the Negro race, and widely accepted as truth even by men of good will, simply prove untrue when one lives among them. This, of course, excludes the trash element, which is the same everywhere and is no more evident among Negroes than whites.

When all the talk, all the propaganda has been cut away, the criterion is nothing but the color of skin. My experience proved that. They judged me by no other quality. My skin was dark. That was sufficient reason for them to deny me

those rights and freedoms without which life loses its significance and becomes a matter of little more than animal survival.

I searched for some other answer and found none. I had spent a day without food and water for no other reason than that my skin was black. I was sitting on a tub in the swamp for no other reason.

I went back into the shanty. The air was slightly warmer and smelled of kerosene, tow sacks and humanity. I lay down in the darkness, in the midst of snores.

"Mr. Griffin ... Mr. Griffin."

I heard the man's soft voice above my shouts. I awakened to see the kerosene lamp and beyond it my host's troubled face.

"Are you all right?" he asked. In the surrounding darkness I sensed the tension. They lay silent, not snoring. "I'm sorry," I said. "I was having a nightmare."

He stood upright. From my position flat on the floor his head appeared to touch the ceiling beams far above. "Are you all right now?"

"Yes, thank you for waking me up."

He stepped carefully over the children and returned to the other room.

It was the same nightmare I had been having recently. White men and women, their faces stern and heartless, closed in on me. The hate stare burned through me. I pressed back against a wall. I could expect no pity, no mercy. They approached slowly and I could not escape them. Twice before, I had awakened myself screaming.

I listened for the family to settle back into sleep. The mosquitoes swarmed. I lighted a cigarette, hoping its smoke would drive them out.

The nightmare worried me. I had begun this experiment in a spirit of scientific detachment. I wanted to keep my feelings out of it, to be objective in my observations. But it was becoming such a profound personal experience, it haunted even my dreams.

My host called me again at dawn. His wife stood in lamplight at the stove, pouring coffee. I washed my face in a bowl of water she had heated for me. We spoke by nods and smiles to avoid waking the children sprawled on the floor.

After breakfast of coffee and a slice of bread, we were ready to leave. I shook hands with her at the door and thanked her. Reaching for my wallet, I told her I wanted to pay her for putting me up.

She refused, saying that I had brought more than I had taken. "If you gave us a penny, we'd owe you change"

I left money with her as a gift for the children, and the husband drove me back to the highway.

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The younger man hesitated, dug in his pocket and tossed a handful of change into the cup. He refused the tract, saying, "I'm sure the money'll be put to good use."

After we had gone two blocks, we heard footsteps behind us. We stopped at a street corner, not looking back. The younger man's voice came to us. "I don't suppose it does any good," he said quietly, "but I apologize for the bad manners of my people."

"Thank you," we said, not turning our heads.

Night coming tenderly

Black like me.

At such a time, the Negro can look at the starlit skies and find that he has, after all, a place in the universal order of things. The stars, the black skies affirm his humanity, his validity as a human being. He knows that his belly, his lungs, his tired legs, his appetites, his prayers and his mind are cherished in some profound involvement with nature and God. The night is his consolation. It does not despise him.

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The roar of wheels turning into the station, the stench of exhaust fumes, the sudden bustles of people unloading told me it was time to go. Men, better and wiser than the night, put me back into my place with their hate stares.

I walked to the back of the bus, past the drowsers, and found an empty seat. The Negroes gave me their sleepy smiles and then we were off. I leaned back and dozed along with the others.

November 25

In Montgomery, the capital of Alabama, I encountered a new atmosphere. The Negro's feeling of utter hopelessness is here replaced by a determined spirit of passive resistance. The Reverend Martin Luther King, Jr.'s influence, like an echo of Gandhi's, prevails. Nonviolent and prayerful resistance to discrimination is the keynote. Here, the Negro has committed himself to a definite stand. He will go to jail, suffer any humiliation, but he will not back down. He will take the insults and abuses stoically so that his children will not have to take them in the future.

The white racist is bewildered and angered by such an attitude, because the dignity of the Negro's course of action emphasizes the indignity of his own. It is a challenge to him to needle the Negro into acts of a baser nature, into open physical conflict. He will walk up and blow cigarette smoke in the Negro's face, hoping the Negro will strike out at him. Then he could repress the Negro violently and claim it was only self-defense.

Where the Negro has lacked unity of purpose elsewhere, he has in Montgomery rallied to the leadership of King. Where he has been degraded elsewhere by unjust men of both races, here he is resisting degradation.

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I could not make out the white viewpoint in Montgomery. It was too fluid, too changeable. A superficial calm hung over the city. At night police were everywhere. I felt that the two races stood like blocks of concrete, immovable, and that the basic issues of right and wrong, of justice and injustice, were lost from view by the whites. The issues had degenerated to who would win. Fear and dread tensed both sides.

The Negroes with whom I associated feared two things. They feared that one of their own might commit an act of violence that would jeopardize their position by allowing the whites to say they were too dangerous to have their rights. They dreaded the awful tauntings of irresponsible white men, the jailing, the frames.

The white man's fears have been widely broadcast. To the Negro these fears of "intermingling" make no sense. All he can see is that the white man wants to hold him down—to make him live up to his responsibilities as a taxpayer and soldier, while denying him the privileges of a citizen. At base, though the white brings forth many arguments to justify his viewpoint, one feels the reality is simply that he cannot bear to "lose" to the traditionally servant class.

The hate stare was everywhere practiced, especially by women of the older generation. On Sunday, I made the experiment of dressing well and walking past some of the white churches just as services were over. In each instance, as the women came through the church doors and saw me, the "spiritual bouquets" changed to hostility. The transformation was grotesque. In all of Montgomery only one woman refrained. She did not smile. She merely looked at me and did not change her expression. My gratitude to her was so great it astonished me.

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December 15, Mansfield, Texas

I sat in the jet this afternoon, flying home from New Orleans, and looked out the window to the patterns of a December countryside far below. And I felt the greatest love for this land and the deepest dread of the task that now lay before me—the task of telling truths that would make me and my family the target of all the hate groups.

But for the moment, the joyful expectation of seeing my wife and children again after seven weeks overwhelmed all other feelings.

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August 17

I hired a Negro youth to come and help me clean up my parents' house so it would be spotless for the new owners. The youth knew me and had no reticence in talking since he was sure I was "one of them" so to speak. Both Negroes and whites have gained this certainty from the experiment—because I was a Negro for six weeks, I remained partly Negro or perhaps essentially Negro.

While we swept and burned old newspapers, we talked.

"Why do the whites hate us—we don't hate them?" he asked.

We had a long conversation during which he brought out the obvious fact that whites teach their children to call them "niggers." He said this happened to him all the time and that he would not even go into white neighborhoods because it sickened him to be called that. He said revealing things:

"Your children don't hate us, do they?"

"God, no," I said. "Children have to be taught that kind of filth. We'd never permit ours to learn it."

"Dr. Cook's like that. His little girl called me nigger and he told her if he ever heard her say that again he'd spank her till she couldn't sit down."

The Negro does not understand the white any more than the white understands the Negro. I was dismayed to see the extent to which this youth exaggerated—how could he do otherwise?—the feelings of the whites toward Negroes. He thought they all hated him.

The most distressing repercussion of this lack of communication has been the rise in racism among Negroes, justified to some extent, but a grave symptom nevertheless. It only widens the gap that men of good will are trying desperately to bridge with understanding and compassion. It only strengthens the white racist's cause. The Negro who turns now, in the moment of near-realization of his liberties, and bares his fangs at a man's whiteness, makes the same tragic error the white racist has made.

And it is happening on a wider scale. Too many of the more militant leaders are preaching Negro superiority. I pray that the Negro will not miss his chance to rise to greatness, to build from the strength gained through his past suffering and, above all, to rise beyond vengeance.

If some spark does set the keg afire, it will be a senseless tragedy of ignorant against ignorant, injustice answering injustice—a holocaust that will drag down the innocent and right-thinking masses of human beings.

Then we will all pay for not having cried for justice long ago.

The situation was doubly dangerous because we thought we were, finally, communicating. We were not, of course, because even well-disposed white men tended to be turned off and affronted if black men told them truths that offended their prejudices. For years it was my embarrassing task to sit in on meetings of whites and blacks, to serve one ridiculous but necessary function: I knew, and every black man there knew, that I, as a man now white once again, could say the things that needed saying but would be rejected if black men said them. In city after city we had these meetings to attempt to communicate, and in each one my function was to say those things that the black men knew much better than I could hope to know, but could not communicate as yet for the simple reason that white men could not tolerate hearing them from a black man's mouth. Dick Gregory and I once made an experiment with this. We agreed to say essentially the same things to a lecture audience at the same school. I got an ovation for "talking straight." He got uncomfortable silence for saying the same things.

Another time, this was eloquently illustrated in a small community where there had been much tension between Protestants and Catholics. A professor of Bible at a local college persuaded the two groups to get together and sponsor a lecture by me. I went in and lectured precisely on these problems of communication. I went into it in great detail. The audience, as always, thought I was talking about somewhere else and was sure it was "different" there. At the end I got a prolonged standing ovation. Afterward I went to a reception for the whites who had promoted the lecture and one black guest. We were introduced. I was told in his presence just how proud the community was of its black industrial psychologist and how he had "gained acceptance" in the most perfect way. The professor of Bible who had initiated the project was jubilant. He remarked loudly what a great success it was and how marvelous that the Protestants and Catholics had finally worked together to make it a success.

"I view this as a historic night," he announced. Then turning to the black industrial psychologist, he asked, "Don't you see this night as a historic turning point for this community?"

The black doctor, in a voice of perfect calm, replied, "Frankly, I'm not too excited."

The Bible professor's face clouded, and he said, "What do you mean?"

The doctor said, "It's true that I have a good job in this town, and I seem to be respected, and I am certainly paid a wage commensurate with my skills. But—so long as I have to house my wife and children in a town twenty miles away because I can't buy, rent, lease or build a home here, don't expect me to get too excited over your 'historic turning points.' "

I watched, fascinated, as the group of whites began to growl and the professor of Bible reddened with anger. "Well, I'll tell you one thing," he said. "If you're going to be that cynical, I don't see how you can expect us to do anything for you."

I heard a local minister mumble to a lady standing beside him, "I knew there'd be trouble if we invited that black man..."

The Bible professor lost most of his self-control. He battered at the lack of graciousness and courtesy that he perceived in the black doctor. The doctor remained calm, lethal in his replies, unshaken.

I watched until the professor was almost screaming his anger and then stepped in. "Isn't this remarkable?" I said. "Here you gave me a standing ovation for telling you this same kind of truth. Now you have a black man, far more knowledgeable than I could be, who is honoring you with a truth, and you are furious with him. You will hear it from me and applaud me for saying it, but you can't stand it yet from him."

The point was finally made, but I doubt if it would ever have been made if that doctor had not been invited and had not spoken up.

Almost constantly and almost everywhere black men were being faced with this kind of duality. Whites were saying the right things, showing deep concern over injustices, expressing determination to resolve the problems of racism, but never really consulting with black people as equals. The vast difference between what this country was saying and apparently believing, and what the black man was experiencing, was embittering.

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Afterword

Historically, Griffin was the first white person to experience directly certain nuances known only to black people. By the simple act of darkening his pigment, he encountered a complex reality formerly unknown to him or any other white person. "My deepest shock," reflected Griffin, "came with the gradual realization that this was not a matter of 'inconvenience' but rather a total change in living. Everything is different. Everything changes." Black Like Me maps these changes, from the topical adjustments on the surface of the story to the subtle shifts in perception, in attitude, in conscience, which slowly develop and emerge from the deep, inward recesses of Griffin's psyche.

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Instead, we have Black Like Me, which centers Griffin exactly where he was in all of his work, entirely immersed in the experience itself, rather than being the "I" or ego observing some "it" out there. This is what gives the book that intense feeling of being here now, even though we know the events happened decades ago. The "I" in this way becomes an instrument immersed in the experiential moment, connecting the "story" (imagined or real) and the reader (who can imagine the reality by losing the "self" in this moment). The book's evocation of naked experience, of what is being done to the narrator rather than what he does, draws us toward the center, engages our emotions and all of our senses. We view scenes in vivid detail, hear precise tones in the dialogue and interior monologue, smell fear, and taste dread, and, perhaps, feel a trickle of sweat while he is under the hot rays of the sunlamp.

Reaching the critical turn in the book—when Griffin stares in the mirror for the first time—we are startled into a new awareness by his reaction. For him, the sudden shock of the "stranger—a fierce, bald, very dark Negro" who "glared" at him—reveals the beginning of Griffin's unique double perspective, although initially he feels split in half. "I became two men, the observing one and the one who panicked, who felt Negroid even into the depths of his entrails." Griffin clings to his inner white identity, the comfort of the familiar ego that seems to be disappearing toward oblivion. In the same instant, he rejects the darker outward appearance of the unknown "Negro" he has become. "The worst of it," he admits, "was that I could feel no companionship with this new person. I did not like the way he looked." He attempts to rationalize his negative reaction as the initial shock of this unexpected, total transformation, but he knows he has come face-to-face with his own racism. The reflection illuminates a crucial blind spot—the unconscious sense of white supremacy—long denied in himself.

When he looked back on this experience from the vantage of the mid-1970s, he "realized at that moment that although I had intellectually liberated myself from all prejudices, they were still deeply ingrained at the emotional level." He was devastated, wondering how he could have been so dedicated to the cause of racial justice, "only to discover that at the level of emotional response I still carried those old racist poisons within me"

Beginning with this pivotal encounter, Griffin faces the mirror six times throughout the journey. Used as a formal literary device, the mirror reflects the changes in the narrator as he achieves a balance between the two perspectives once split. From the initial shock of terror recorded in the first scene, the predominant responses of the subsequent scenes are: avoidance and denial; anger and shame; despair and guilt; and, finally, an acceptance that penetrates the stereotypes of otherness to a deeper immersion in the universal condition of being human. There is the sixth and final scene when he sees himself—white again—as if reclaiming his identity.

For the reader, these mirror images are held up to an evolving self-scrutiny and a growing awareness of the insidious, systematic poison of racism in everyone. *Black Like Me* can work as an antidote for the release of these inculcated prejudices and serve as a healing guide at the emotional level, including the guilt so often attached to our denial. Griffin's experience was a radical deprogramming of his unacknowledged shame, but he did not encourage anyone to follow his painful path because he respected the privacy of conscience and knew that each person's struggle must be a private book of changes.

"I do not represent myself as a spokesman for black people or for anyone else," he insisted during our first interview in 1966. He called *Black Like Me* "a personal nightmare," and he was exhausted by the grind of constant traveling and lecturing. "I have had a life that I loathe these past five years," he lamented, "but I have had to go in conscience and also because I am under spiritual direction and because we've had one racial crisis after another." I returned for many visits over the next fifteen years of our friendship, but the conversation always turned away from racism to his need to complete unfinished novels and to rediscover the solitude he had been forced to abandon for the public arena.

.....

John Howard Griffin died on September 9, 1980, from the lifelong complications of diabetes, at the age of sixty. At the funeral, I promised his widow that I would be prepared to work on his papers whenever she decided. It was not until two years later, in the autumn of 1982, that I returned to the Griffin home. With Elizabeth as executor, the family established The Estate of John Howard Griffin, appointing me as the authorized biographer, editor, and agent for the estate. In May 1983, Elizabeth and I were married.

Teaching for Experiential Learning - Five Approaches that Work

by Scott D. Wurdinger and Julie A. Carlson

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Chapter 1: The Need for Experiential Learning

There are numerous educators both education settings doing outstanding jobs motivating and inspiring students to learn. The education system however, makes it challenging for these educators to pursue and implement teaching strategies that increase motivation and inspire students to learn.

Research articles and books about exemplary schools and educators who are raising test scores that meet or exceed the No Child left Behind (NCLB) benchmarks are plentiful, but should raising test scores be the primary goal for all schools in the United States? What about helping students become effective problem solvers? What about helping them become team players? What about helping them become self-directed learners? What about inspiring students to become lifelong learners?

We are inspired when we listen to learners tell stories about their experiences of when they were most engaged with learning. Examples include fieldwork outside the classroom, discussion and interaction with teachers and students, challenging each other's ideas and practices, and doing meaningful work that can be implemented in real world settings. These stories provide anecdotal evidence, which emphatically supports the notion that students are most excited about learning when they are actively involved in the learning process through discussion, group work, hands-on participation, and applying information outside the classroom. There appears to be a huge chasm between how students like to learn and how teachers teach.

Unfortunately, the lecture format results in the use of lower level thinking strategies, which do not motivate or inspire students to learn.

BRIEF HISTORY OF EXPERIENTIAL LEARNING

One would be remiss without mentioning John Dewey's contributions to the theory and practice of experiential learning. He wrote numerous books and articles that discuss the value of experience in the educational process, and is probably referenced more often in experiential learning literature than any other writer. Interestingly, he never used the term "experiential learning" in any of the titles of his articles or books, but he did discuss the intricate process of an educational experience which has provided experiential educators with a solid theoretical foundation.

He discusses a learning process that is initiated by an indeterminate situation, which is a question or problem. This starting point in the pattern of inquiry is perplexity, which is followed by observations of the facts, the development of a hypothesis or plan, and testing the hypothesis for validity (p. 230-33).

This process according to Dewey is "serial" (p. 234) not linear and reflection may occur throughout this process as one attempts to solve a problem, "the new order of facts suggests a modified idea (or hypothesis) which occasions new observations whose result again determines a new order of facts, and so on until the existing order is both unified and complete" (p. 234).

Dewey's pattern of inquiry consists of six steps; however, his explanation of this theory is very similar to the scientific method. He explains that a relevant problem (step one) causes perplexity and desire to find an answer, which is then followed by creating a plan (step two), testing the plan against reality (step three), and reflecting on its worth (step four). The planning and testing phases of this process are what make learning active. Responding to instructor questions and reciting back information allow students to talk, but learning becomes experiential when they create plans to solve problems and test them against reality. Creating a web site, building a learning portfolio, performing a chemistry experiment, creating a piece of artwork, or building something off a blueprint, all require students to plan and test ideas in order to determine their worth. For Dewey learning requires doing something with the subject matter aside from reciting and memorizing information.

Dewey (1938a) believed this was the common structure of learning used by human beings long before formal education was introduced into society. He identifies two modes of inquiry called *common sense* and *scientific inquiry*, and both use the same learning process but for different purposes. The first would be used to solve the problems humans face with ordinary life experience, and the latter would be used to solve problems in the sciences. In either case the process is the same and people use either mode of inquiry intuitively to solve problems on a daily basis in order to sustain and maintain life. Whether building a bird house or building a space shuttle, people use this trial and error process to refine and improve upon their ideas and practices.

Experiential educators adopted this learning theory because it requires direct experience with the subject matter. When students are not allowed to test out their ideas the "subject matter becomes arbitrary, aloof—what is called 'abstract' when that word is used in a bad sense to designate something which exclusively occupies a realm of its own without contact with the things of ordinary experience" (Dewey, as cited in McDermott, 1973, p. 255). Students need to experience things firsthand by creating, designing, building, and testing ideas in order to determine their worth. Experiential learning requires learners to undergo Dewey's pattern of inquiry and test out their ideas against reality, which helps them become more effective problem solvers. Memorizing a particular method of teaching is quite different than actually applying the method in a real classroom.

Dewey's learning theory, which requires more time and flexibility, was not as efficient as the lecture format in disseminating large amounts of information quickly, so the pattern of inquiry gave way to information assimilation where intelligence was measured by how much students could remember, as opposed to how much they could apply. Textbooks became the primary source of information and teachers became the conduits through which this information flowed.

Dewey argued vehemently against this approach to education and believed that traditional education stifled student creativity and motivation and led to apathy and boredom. "Why is it, in spite of the fact that teaching by pouring in, learning by a passive absorption, are universally condemned, that they are still so entrenched in practice? That education is not an affair of 'telling' and being told, but an active and constructive process, is a principle almost as generally violated in practice as conceded in theory (Dewey, 1938b, p. 38). Unfortunately, passive methods of learning continue to be fairly prevalent today.

Working together in small groups to solve a problem, designing and completing projects, or giving formal presentations to classmates in classroom settings all entail going through a process of creating a plan, testing it to determine if it is valid, and reflecting on the process. Educators should concentrate on engaging students in a problem solving process, no matter where it occurs, because it is a vital life skill that students should acquire by the time they graduate from high school.

Educators that view experiential learning as experience occurring outside the classroom sometimes view it as something that happens spontaneously or unintentional and is unaided by an educator. This view of experiential learning suggests that learning occurs only after reflection, which is a reactive model of learning left to chance. Without guidance, the experience could result in a non-educative experience.

To be proactive, educators need to be intentional with their teaching approaches and create structures that incorporate experience with reflection in education settings. The five teaching approaches discussed in this book intentionally attempt to implement experiential learning where students undergo a problem solving process, which begins with a problem and ends with a solution. Solving the problem may entail going outside the classroom and working with any number of individuals inside and/or outside one's community.

Teacher's Role

1. The teacher will act as a guide allowing students to make mistakes and learn from them along the way.
2. Teachers will provide students with freedom to experiment in order to discover solutions to the problems they encounter.
3. The teacher will provide students with resources and information when they get stuck so that they can continue moving forward with their learning.

Student's Role

1. Students will be allowed freedom in the classroom as long as they are moving forward in the learning process.
2. Students may need to undergo a series of trials and errors as they attempt to complete the assignment.
3. Students should understand that the problem solving process becomes as important as the content being learned.

Chapter Two Active Learning

The term *active learning* is most often associated with a list of classroom strategies that include role-plays, simulations, debates, presentations, case studies, and drama. The goal of active learning is to promote student participation and interaction in the classroom.

Bonwell and Eison provide a simple definition, stating that active learning is "anything that involves students in doing things and thinking about the things they are doing" (1991, p. 2). Meyers and Jones provide more detail in their definition: "active learning provides opportunities for students to talk and listen, read, write, and reflect as they approach course content through problem-solving exercises, informal small groups, simulations, case studies, role playing, and other activities—all of which require students to apply what they are learning" (1993, p. xi).

Most of the strategies imply that active learning is a group process, but according to Bonwell and Sutherland (1996), some strategies do not require students to work in groups. Presentations, for example, may be done individually, whereas debates and role-plays are designed for group interaction. Cooperative and collaborative learning are two methods that seem to have evolved out of active learning and use many of the same strategies. These two methods emphasize the importance of learning skills such as communication, responsibility, time management, and being a team player that occur when working in groups. Whether working alone or in groups, the classroom strategies are the same and attempt to get students talking in the classroom.

Chapter 3: Problem-Based and Inquiry-Based Learning

Finding solutions to authentic problems through in-depth investigation is the essence of *problem-based learning*. In so doing, it provides opportunities for learners to work collaboratively, use their informal and formal prior knowledge, engage in constructivism, and develop their self-directed learning skills (Schmidt, Loyens, Van Gog, & Paas, 2007, p. 92). Problem solving and inquiry also help learners to develop observation and reasoning skills (Inquiry Learning Forum, 2008). The Problem-Based Learning Network (2008, n.p.) offers this description of the instructional method:

Problem-based learning is an educational approach that organizes curriculum and instruction around carefully crafted "ill-structured" problems. Students gather and apply knowledge from multiple disciplines in their quest for solutions. Guided by teachers acting as cognitive coaches, they develop critical thinking, problem solving, and collaborative skills as they identify problems, formulate hypotheses, conduct data searches, perform experiments, formulate solutions and determine the best "fit" of solutions to the conditions of the problem.

HISTORY

Humans have naturally engaged in problem-solving and inquiry-seeking activities since the beginning of their existence. Acknowledging that, it can be accurately stated that educational philosopher, John Dewey, was a pioneer in articulating problem-based and inquiry-based learning as intentional educational approaches (Hmelo-Silver, 2004), although he did not use those specific terms. One noteworthy contribution Dewey made

to PBL / IBL was his *pattern of inquiry*, a set of procedures for investigating and solving problems, also referred to by him as *indeterminate situations* (as cited in McDermott, 1981, p. 227). Dewey described *inquiry* as the controlled transformation of an indeterminate situation into a determinate one whose elements are brought together into a unified whole (McDermott, 1981, p. 227). His pattern of inquiry, perhaps more commonly known as *the scientific method*, forms the basis of what is used by researchers and young learners alike to solve problems, needs, and difficulties every day.

To briefly recap from chapter 1, the basic steps of the pattern of inquiry are the following:

- (1) identify the problem,
- (2) make a plan for solving the problem,
- (3) form a hypothesis,
- (4) test the planned solution,
- (5) assess or reflect on the solution, and
- (6) make a new plan if the solution did not work or apply the successful solution to a new situation or new problem (Dewey, 1938a).

Problem-Based Learning

During the 1960s, medical educators were formulating opinions that the usual programs of study based on lectures and intensive clinical sessions were not adequately or humanely preparing their students for medical practice (Savery, 2006). The traditional programs also did not allow for opportunities to use "hypothetical deductive reasoning" (p. 10) or to use context to aid students in applying what they learned. Medical knowledge had grown to the point where memorization and retrieval was challenging and exhaustive. In response, McMaster University Medical School (2008) in Ontario began to focus parts of its training programs on solving actual problems of medical practice by combining "small group, cooperative, self-directed, interdependent, self-assessed" (n.p.) learning approaches. These approaches also altered the role of the instructor from lecturer and examiner to facilitator and tutor. The Medical School began to refer to this combined approach as simply *problem-based learning*, and is recognized as the originator of the term. The approach soon spread throughout the medical field in North America and Europe, and was soon adopted and morphed by various other disciplines and grade levels (Savery, 2006).

Deciding What Variation to Use

Newell (2007) created five variations of project-based learning that explain how it is used in classroom settings. The variations are like a spectrum, with number one being entirely teacher-directed and number five being student-directed. Teachers control the entire process on one end and students on the other. It may be helpful for educators to determine what variation they wish to utilize, and use the corresponding guidelines as a tool to help implement project-based learning with their students.

1. Project is teacher-controlled:

Project is part of curricular unit, text, etc.

All students do the same thing.

No student choice.

Graded as part of class unit.

2. Project is teacher-controlled:

Allows for student inquiry, choice of topic within curriculum.

Students have to frame their own questions.

All students have same time frame.

Graded as part of class unit.

3. Project is set up and orchestrated by teacher:

Project is inquiry-based, looks at "big picture"; still curriculum-based. Project is interdisciplinary and thematic in nature.

Students may be in cooperative groups, teaming.

Performance, product assessment is used as well as class grade.

4. Project created with teacher-student interaction: Project is interdisciplinary in nature, inquiry-based, authentic. Rubrics assess performances, critical thinking, and problem solving. Students may be in cooperative groups, teaming, or whole class.

Includes place-based projects, community service, etc. Time frame is negotiable, but within semester, or units.

5. Project is student-driven, authentic:

Project is teacher-facilitated with teachers providing the process.

The "whole world" is the curriculum, with state standards guiding the work. Rubrics assess learning-to-learn skills, individual development, etc. Performance and products assessed, performances to real-world audience.

May be individual or group projects. Could include place-based, community service projects.

Nongraded, time frame negotiable.

Working Alone or in Groups

After deciding which variation is most appropriate for your classroom setting, you will want to determine whether students will work alone or if they will be allowed to work together on their projects. This requires some thinking and planning on your part because there are definite advantages and disadvantages to each. For instance, if they work alone, then each student will be doing all of his or her own work to complete the project, whereas if they work together, it is possible that one or two students may end up doing most of the work.

Creating a Different Classroom Culture

After determining whether students will work alone or on group projects, you will need to determine what role you will play in the project process. How much control will you take over the process? There is no doubt that helping students identify manageable projects is important. Projects should be mentally challenging so that students engage in critical thought during the planning, testing, and reflecting phases, but should not be too challenging; otherwise students may get discouraged, which could bring the learning process to a sudden halt. But too much control may hinder the learning process. For example, when a teacher in a technical education classroom provides students with a hand-out explaining a step-by-step process on how to build a wooden clock and then demonstrates how to construct the clock, little, if any, problem solving is necessary. The students are not challenged in this situation because they simply copy what the teacher has demonstrated.

On the other hand, planning, testing, and reflecting become an integral part of the learning process if this same teacher explains to students that they need to build a working clock with certain materials and resources and then allows them to experiment on their own. Challenging students by providing them with opportunities for creative thought allows them to explore and determine what the best design and building process might be.

This approach also allows students to think creatively and become more self-directed learners. They are able to explore their own personal learning styles, and, when they succeed by completing their projects, it fosters a sense of self-worth because they realize that they can overcome challenges that at first appeared insurmountable. Project-based learning requires students to solve difficult problems, which may ultimately help students become more effective problem solvers and lead to a broader and more complete understanding of the subject matter.

At first, this process may be uncomfortable. When students are creating projects they need some freedom to move around the room or building, acquiring the necessary resources to do their projects. It may appear chaotic; however, a classroom culture that allows for some freedom, along with clear expectations, is necessary when using this approach.

Chapter 5: 5 Service-Learning

Service-learning is a well-known experiential approach to the teaching/ learning process that has been utilized for decades by multitudes of schools, youth agencies, and education-related organizations. It is probably the most familiar approach among those presented in this book, and therefore, perhaps the least likely, when mentioned in public conversation, to be followed with the comment, "Service-learning? What is that?"

In spite of its familiarity, misconceptions still exist that use the term *service-learning* to refer to service of any kind for any reason. Although volunteer work and service projects are intent on fulfilling community needs, the main beneficiary is the recipient of the service. Only when service *and* learning are mutually emphasized does service-learning occur.

Generally, service-learning entails three requisite phases:

- (1) planning to fill a community need,
- (2) action, and
- (3) reflection (Berger Kaye, 2004).

By emphasizing all three components, it is easy to see that service alone (the action) without the intentional educational aspects (planning and reflection) would not meet the accepted criteria for service-learning. By slightly shifting one's thinking of the term from service-learning to *learning from service*, it further becomes evident that the focus is the learning that comes from the service experience, and not simply the service. The learning that results is either equally or more important than the service itself.

A fourth phase that is often added is presentation or demonstration, meaning an intentionally planned way for the learners involved in the experience to share with others what they accomplished and learned. This also provides an opportunity to share ideas for future service opportunities they would like to experience. Some educators refer to the four stages as *preparation, action, reflection, and demonstration*, and use the acronym, *PARD*, to describe the formula or model they use to implement service-learning (Berger Kaye, 2004). A slight twist to this last phase is to add some way of evaluating the quality of the experience or the level of performance of the learners. In this case, the acronym, *PARE*, has been used, with the "E" representing evaluation rather than demonstration (Gupta, 2006).

Preparation and Planning

The first step in preparation is deciding on the service project or projects that will take place. The decision-making process depends on how much time is available for this stage, on the extent that the service-learning will play in the curriculum, and on the age group. Ideas for projects may come from a list of possibilities that have already been compiled by a local government, university, or community agency, or perhaps have been generated from previous knowledge of a community need. There are also many online sources available for generating ideas. A fairly new online resource is a tool from Learn and Serve America's National Clearinghouse website. The tool is called Service-Learning Ideas and Curricular Examples (SLICE), and is a searchable database of projects, lessons, and syllabi. If time allows, the projects may be determined after investigation by the students of the various needs that are prevalent in their community.

Preparation also involves becoming informed about the service topic. Common topics include the environment, homelessness, hunger, literacy, immigrants, seniors and the elderly, safety awareness, animals, and medical concerns. Gathering knowledge about the topic can involve reading, field trips, guest speakers, films, newspapers, and interviews. Students should know going into a service-learning experience some of the underlying causes that created the community need, some of the past and current endeavors to resolve the need, and the demographics and characteristics of the people who are most affected by the need. They should also be familiar with the agency that they will be working with during the service project—its mission, its history, and from where it derives its funding.

Depending on the service project chosen, an action plan may need to be developed by the students. There may be schedules that need to be arranged and different tasks that need to be divided among small groups. Finally, preparation includes all of the logistics that need to be in place for the event such as transportation, materials, chaperones, particular clothing, food, drink, and a back-up plan in case weather is a concern.

Action

The action phase will obviously be more successful if the preparation leading up to it has been thorough. In anticipation of the reflection step that follows, learners can be encouraged to make observations of their own behavior during their experience and to be cognizant of what they think they are learning along the way.

Depending on the age group of the learners and the extent of the service project, the instructor may or may not be present during the actual service activities. If the instructor is present, it may be best to roam around, checking on different groups, and being available to solve problems or observe individual and group performance. Other times, it may be right for the instructor to take part in the activities, to model for and help motivate students.

Reflection

One of the key components of service-learning is reflection—the stage where learning outcomes are identified and the experience advances from just service to service-learning. This is also where transfer of learning begins to take place from the current experience to future learning situations. During reflection, learners recall what they accomplished, identify feelings and emotions, and attach meaning to and conceptualize what they experienced. There are various ways to guide the students through reflection, and, with experience, instructors will learn what works best for certain types of experiences and certain ages of learners.

Whatever type of reflection activities are implemented, it is important to ensure that reflection is facilitated in a way that retains emotional safety

for all learners. If reflecting verbally in a group format, establishing ground rules first is recommended. Some commonly used rules are (1) everyone gets a turn, (2) everyone is listened to respectfully without interruptions or put downs, (3) everyone has a right to pass (meaning that no one should be forced or coerced into speaking out loud).

Specific reflection sessions often involve answering open-ended questions crafted by the instructor to provide a place to discuss what happened and draw out the important aspects of the service experience. These questions may be answered in oral or written form, and individually or in partners or in small groups. Shorter reflection sessions (five to ten minutes) are more successful with younger ages or groups with shorter attention spans. With older secondary or college students, reflection sessions may remain at enthusiastic levels for an hour or more. The purpose of the questions and subsequent discussions is to mindfully guide the learners in self-identifying the relevance and growth that occurred. Some potential questions to get started are provided here, but the possibilities of reflective questions are endless.

- What was my general schedule of activities today? What did I do first, second, and so on?
- What activities were the highlights for me? What made them positive?
- What activities were not among my favorites today? What made them so?
- Did I feel comfortable or uncomfortable during my experience today?
- How well did I perform my job or tasks today?
- How well did I cooperate with others?
- What kind of impression did I make on the people I was serving or helping?
- How satisfied am I with my experience today?
- What could I have done to make today more positive?
- What do I think are the main things I learned today about myself? About others? About the people who live in my community?
- Am I interested in more service-learning projects in the future?
- If I were to participate in another service-learning project, would I want to do something similar or provide a different kind of service next time?

- If I were to participate in another project, what would I want to remember from today to help me have a positive learning experience next time?

In addition to reflective questioning sessions, there are other venues for helping students to reflect on their service projects. Journaling is among the most common of individual reflection activities. Journaling may involve responding to specific questions such as those posed previously, or may simply be an outlet for free writing of whatever comes to mind regarding the service experience. Journals are especially helpful and appropriate when learners will be participating in several service-learning opportunities over time. They are also a convenient way to involve everyone when time for reflection may be limited during class time or when the entire group is not easily gathered at the end of a service event. Journals can also be taken home and turned in another day. It should be noted that a comprehensive study of over twenty-two thousand undergraduate college students found that journaling by itself did not increase learning to the same extent as reflection that included peer dialogue about the experience (Astin et al., 2000).

Props of various kinds are sometimes helpful catalysts for reflection, too, and can easily be made from inexpensive materials. One example is to cut out several pictures and images from old magazines and ask learners to choose one that represents something from their experience that day. This may be slipped into their journal and remain private, or they may share with their peers what they chose and explain the reasons why they chose that particular image.

Another prop example is to blow up a beach ball and write an emotion on each section of the ball or all over the ball such as "nervous," "uncertain," "confident," "satisfied," "happy," or "sad" on it. Toss the ball around and ask students to choose the emotion that most closely resembles what they felt before the service project started, how they feel now that it is completed, and the reasons why.

A third example is to point to various parts of the body to represent different aspects of the experience. For example, point to your eye and ask, "What was something you saw today that made an impression on you?" Point to your ear and ask, "What was something you heard today that you've never heard before?" The heart represents something that was touching or evoked a strong emotion. The brain represents something that was thought, but not said. Hands represent someone who deserves applause or someone who lent a hand. Feet represent something that moved the job or task forward or someone who led the way. The mouth represents something that was profoundly spoken or something that brought a smile to others.

The main thing to remember with reflection is to plan it with particular objectives in mind, and then to make sure enough time is provided for it. A rushed or deleted reflection session can be what makes the difference between a successful service-learning experience and one that leaves learners lost and disappointed.

Evaluation

The evaluation phase includes evaluation by both the students and the instructors, and even sometimes by the recipients of the service. The depth and breadth of evaluation depends on how integrated service-learning is into the particular class or curriculum through which it took place—whether it is a one-time event or an ongoing series of events throughout a semester or year.

The purpose for the evaluation is also important to consider, and determines what the instructor needs to assess. Will the service-learning be used as a graded assignment? Will the service event be followed by another at the same place, and therefore require evaluation to improve aspects of it for next time? Will the event be followed by a more involved project covering a longer length of time, and therefore require more careful preparation?

One aspect of evaluation that is often encouraged is an opportunity for the students to demonstrate or present to others what they feel were the most important aspects of their learning experience. This may take place in front of other class members, or perhaps parent groups, community groups, or other school-related groups. To add the dimension of applying their learning to new situations, students are often asked to also identify future service-learning opportunities they would like to experience and why.

Davis, Miller, and Corbett (1998) produced a comprehensive manual, available online through Florida's Learn and Serve America website, devoted to evaluating service-learning activities. The manual provides several qualitatively and quantitatively oriented options and sample forms for evaluation. The qualitatively oriented pieces include instructor observations of individuals and groups, rubrics, students' assessments of what they experienced, and ways to assess student journals and portfolios. A few of the blank forms, slightly adapted, that seem to be the most widely applicable are offered in Figures 5.1, 5.2, 5.3, and 5.4. They can easily be altered for use with various age groups. The manual also provides forms that have been completed as examples for instructors.

Simple Classroom Example of Teaching Using Experiential Learning – Lipstick Revenge

Using Nail Polish to Teach about Gender and Homophobia

Nelta M. Edwards

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<https://www.jstor.org/stable/27896551>

Here I describe a simple, but powerful, exercise using nail polish to teach about the relationship between gender and homophobia. I ask students to find a friend of the opposite gender and take turns painting each other's fingernails. Most students choose partners from outside of the class, although they may do the exercise with classmates if they wish. Students may choose any color polish except clear, and each participant must attempt to wear the fingernail polish for at least 24 hours. I provide students with a set of questions that they must answer for themselves, and they must interview their nail polish partners about the experience. Students write up a description of the experience and use terms and concepts introduced in the course to analyze their experiences (see Appendix A).

The nail polish assignment is an example of a breaching exercise in which experimenters engage in unexpected behavior to observe the reactions of others. This sort of assignment is a mainstay in American sociology, drawing from ethnomethodology developed by Garfinkel (1967). Sociology teachers have refined and expanded Garfinkel's work by using a waiting-in-line exercise, in which students do not move to the front of a public line, to get students to see how norms and values structure even mundane activities and to teach the concept of anomie (Rafalovich 2006). Halnon (2001) has students 'do nothing' in a public place for 30 minutes, in order to teach the concept of stigma.

In addition to being a breaching exercise, the nail polish assignment is an experiential exercise in that it asks students to do something and then reflect upon it. It is modeled after other experiential learning exercises and assignments that have sought to teach particular aspects of gender and sexuality. For example, Boyle (1995) directs students to their local shopping mall to make observations about gender. Specific observations of interactions, displays, and products reveal the social construction of gender in everyday life. Taylor (2003) uses content analysis of popular children's books to uncover gender stereotypes. In small groups, students look for gender stereotyping in the text, pictures, the use of color and symbols, and the characters. Taylor uses this exercise as a jumping-off point for a take-home assignment in which he asks students to make broader observations about gender stereotypes in the media and contemplate the affect these stereotypes may have had on their own gender identity.

Experiential exercises have also been used to teach about various aspects of sexuality. Eichstedt (1996) uses active-listening exercises, as well as observation of public displays of affection, contrasting heterosexual and same-sex couples. Through observations made in public places such as the bus depot, airport, or shopping mall, students count all of the displays of affection between people the students read as heterosexual and between those students read as gay. Students must also record how it is that they determine who is straight and who is homosexual. This exercise helps students to see that perceptions about who is 'flaunting it' depend very much on the couple involved. Anderson (2001) uses a 'coming out' role play to explore societal attitudes toward gays and lesbians. He divides students into groups of 'parents' and 'children' and asks them each to discuss societal opinions of gays and lesbians and how gays and lesbians are treated. The group of 'parents' discusses the fears of and implications for parents who may have a gay or lesbian child. The group of 'children' discusses the fears and issues of children who are thinking about coming out to their parents. After the discussion, volunteers act out what the group has come up with, once for a male child and once for a female child. De Welde and Hubbard (2003) developed an assignment in which they ask students to come out to someone important to them in a letter. The letter is never sent. Instead, students use the text of the letter as data to analyze their own reactions, especially their internalized homophobia. This assignment gets heterosexual students much closer to the actual fears experienced by their homosexual classmates than if they were simply asked to think about what it would be like to come out. The above pedagogical endeavors point to the efficacy of experiential learning, including breaching experiments, as a way of helping students to develop a sociological imagination. Indeed, Grauerholz and Copenhaver (1994) maintain that it is almost impossible for students to develop a sociological imagination without some sort of experiential learning. I would add that experiential learning is especially effective in teaching about gender and sexuality because the gender dichotomy and heterosexuality are so deeply embedded in our cultural psyche that they become invisible (Lorber 1997) and are seen as 'natural' (Seidman 2003).

My intention with the nail polish assignment is to demonstrate the relationship between gender and sexuality in order to show how gender conformity is enforced by homophobia and heterosexism. Miller and Lucal (2009) have examined the relationship between gender and sexuality in terms of what Butler (1991) refers to as the 'heterosexual matrix.' In the heterosexual matrix, men who are masculine in their appearance and behavior are assumed to be straight. Likewise, women who are feminine in their appearance and behavior are assumed to be straight. Thus, men who are not masculine in their behavior and appearance are assumed to be gay, and women who are not feminine in their appearance and behavior are assumed to be lesbian. Gender and sexuality work in relation to each other, as we usually read gender first and from that make assumptions about sexuality (Miller and Lucal 2009). Describing gender and sexuality in this way draws a neat box of dichotomies for gender (man/woman) and sexuality (heterosexual/homosexual), with the corresponding causal arrows going from gender to sexuality. My intention with this exercise is not to reinscribe the heterosexual matrix, but I do want to make it explicit because I want students to understand the homophobia (and heterosexism) that underlies what

students often think of as more benign gender categories. I want students to see what is at stake around gender conformity and that the impulse to conform is related to the shame, hatred, and violence endemic to homophobia. This matrix, though socially constructed, is part of the cultural reality, and straight students as well as lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender (LGBT) students benefit from understanding the way that it operates. In fact, this exercise may be particularly interesting and useful to LGBT students in that it names the normative structure under which they struggle.

THE NAIL POLISH ASSIGNMENT

My teaching goals with this assignment are

- (1) to get students to deconstruct the relationship between gender and sexuality,
- (2) to help students to recognize the homophobia that underlies gender conformity, and
- (3) to get students to empathize with people who do not have normative sexual and/or gender identities.

Below I describe student reactions to the exercise, using anecdotal quotes from students collected over the years that I have been using this assignment.

Polish as Gender and the Color of Gender

From the start, nail polish gets students thinking about gender. First and most obviously, nail polish on men violates male gender norms for adornment. While some men may wear clear or black nail polish, nail polish is not widely considered part of the culturally accepted adornment repertoire for men. This is certainly true at the university where I teach, where students are primarily first-generation college students. Colored nail polish is worn almost exclusively by women in this and in many other areas of the United States. In and of itself, however, there is nothing inherently gendered about nail polish. We, as a culture, have designated colored nail polish as appropriate for women.

Second, this exercise gets students to think about gender in relation to nail polish color. Students report that men participating in this exercise choose the color of their nail polish with their gender performance in mind. Most men choose black because it is "the most masculine color." Students commonly note that men who belong to the Goth subculture wear black nail polish, and thus black polish is "the only acceptable color for men." The next most preferred color reported for men is blue. Blue, of course, is seen as the quintessential masculine color in American society. A few male students or partners will deliberately choose a "loud" or "girly" color because they enjoy the prospect of gender bending or deliberately breaking social norms around gender performance. Women most often report choosing their nail polish to match an outfit they plan on wearing.

Finding and Becoming a Gender Bender

Women students often report having a difficult time finding a partner with whom to complete the exercise. One student wrote, "I asked eight different men and finally my boyfriend agreed." Other women describe securing a partner with descriptions like, "long negotiations," "pleading and persuading," and as "requiring a great deal of skill and patience." Some women resort to a sort of bribery: "First I had to buy him lunch" and "He agreed to do it but said that I owed him, big time." Women, who are not subject to a parallel homophobia, learn a lot about the power that homophobia has on male behavior. I warn women students that they may have difficulty securing a nail polish partner, so they should plan accordingly.

Students describe the setting in which the nail painting takes place with some sense of unfolding drama—"It was a Saturday night, no one was home." Students often report that painting each other's fingernails makes them laugh. They laugh at the process of having one or more inexperienced painter. They laugh at the look of polish on "large nails." They laugh and act out stereotypical feminine behavior and make "girl talk." Laughter seems to be a way of affirming that what is happening should not be taken seriously. Others, however, report constant discomfort: "He moaned and groaned through the whole process."

Upon looking at their painted nails, male participants report a range of reactions from "It feels funny—heavy, wet, foreign" to "I felt out of place, and 'I look like a freak!'" Words commonly used to describe how men wearing nail polish felt when they first looked at their painted nails include stupid, ridiculous, embarrassed, wrong, humiliated, ashamed, insecure, and vulnerable. Steinem (1997) makes the point that behaviors and characteristics associated with men are celebrated in patriarchal culture, while those associated with women are not. When men wear colored nail polish they are doing what society has deemed as appropriate mostly for women. Because women are beneath men in the gender hierarchy, doing what women do may lead men to have negative feelings about themselves.

The Consequences of Gender Bending

Women, especially those accustomed to having painted nails or those who are neat in their personal grooming habits, often express dismay at the prospect of "going out in public" with "sloppy" or "messy" nails. Indeed, many women report that other people questioned them about the shoddy nail job, "Who painted your nails, a five-year-old?" For some women, the gender-nonconforming behavior is not the nail polish itself but the poor jobs that their nail polish partners may have done in applying it. Personal discomfort and/or public disapproval of women for having messy nail polish exemplifies the importance of physical appearance for these women. However, for other women, especially for those who have never partaken in this particular aspect of feminine gender performance (Butler 1990), getting recognition or even compliments for wearing nail polish often comes as a surprise and seems to be taken with some chagrin. Another surprise for women students is that some men turn out to be rather talented at applying nail polish and that they take the task quite seriously.

Male participants who do go about their daily routines wearing nail polish often endure a substantial amount of teasing and harassing. Common terms used against the male nail polish wearers include sissy, faggot, homo, and fairy. Homophobic epithets such as these encourage both children and adults to conform to gender roles. The lion's share of the harassment comes from other men. Students seldom report that women, both those known

and unknown to the male nail polisher wearer, engage in name-calling. Occasionally, women report that they are not comfortable with their partners' nails: "Having him out of that masculine role bothered me a little."

Male participants "cope" with gender bending in a variety of ways, the most common of which is simply not to go out in public while wearing the fingernail polish. While students may take ribbing or even haranguing from family and friends, most prefer this to getting even the slightest questioning look from a stranger. Male participants often report that they kept their hands in their pockets while in public. One student kept the assignment sheet in his front shirt pocket and if he perceived that anyone might have observed his fingernails, he whipped out the assignment sheet and explained, "It's for a Soc. 101 class!" This disavowal of nonnormative behavior is similar to what De Welde and Hubbard (2003) found in their coming-out letter assignment. Despite explicit instructions to assume the identity of someone who is lesbian, gay, or bisexual, straight students would assert their heterosexuality and rely on heterosexual privilege in both writing the letter and their analysis of it.

Gender Nonconformity and Homophobia

As hinted at above, what makes this exercise most powerful is that it unearths the relationship between gender and homophobia. In this society, we believe that gender-appropriate behavior signals heterosexuality and that gender-nonconforming behavior signals homosexuality. In raising children, we encourage boys to "act like boys" and girls to "act like girls," whatever that might be at the particular historical moment, because then, we believe, everyone will turn out to be heterosexual (Pogrebin 1997). Men who engage in "womanly" behavior, according to this cultural logic, must be gay. The stinging fear, when many male students think about or see themselves with painted nails, is that "other people might think I am a fag." This conflation of gender with sexuality in the cultural logic makes it difficult to unpack the relationship between the two. Students jump from gender nonconformity to sexuality without noticing that they have made the leap.

Homophobia also explains why most male participants do not report dismay with family, friends, coworkers, and/or strangers who negatively sanction their wearing of nail polish. In fact, most male participants seem quick to condone the homophobic sanctions, citing that they themselves would have reacted in the same way. "I expected it. I would have acted the same way. Men aren't supposed to do stuff like that" and "I would have thought my friends were weird if they said it was cool." Only occasionally will a student note disappointment about homophobia: "If I had not been with my friend during the 24-hour period, the hostility may have escalated to a more dangerous level. I think that it is a sad commentary about this society that something as trivial as nail polish could actually infringe on a person's safety." However, nail polish is not trivial when it is thought to signal the "wrong" kind of sexuality. Vasquez (1992) found that gay bashing is most commonly triggered by perceptions on the part of the attacker that the victim acts in gender-nonconforming ways: "He acts like a girl." For men, part of "proving" their masculinity is asserting their heterosexuality, often through homophobic thoughts, language, and even violence (Seidman 2003).

Because students most often fail to note any dismay about the homophobia—they are upset about their sexuality being misinterpreted, not about the homophobia—I point this out when handing back the papers and ask students to think about how their attitudes reflect and perpetuate homophobia and heterosexism. If students felt uncomfortable, threatened, and/or scared during this short exercise, I ask them to think about how it would feel to be under constant threat of violence, at the most extreme, or

under widespread social disapproval, at the least. By giving heterosexual students a taste of the fear and hostility under which nonheterosexuals and/or gender nonconformists live, I hope to give them empathy for their nonconformist peers.

Evaluating the Exercise

To evaluate the nail polish assignment I used the e-mail feature on Blackboard to solicit student responses (see Appendix B). I wanted to use random sampling to avoid the methodological problems with convenience samples, including positive bias and nongeneralizability. I thought that students would rate the exercise more favorably if they were in my class when I queried them, as would be the case for convenience samples. Plus, I wanted my results to be generalizable to the population of my students who had completed the nail polish assignment. I attached a combined survey and consent form to the e-mail (see Appendix C). The internal review board (IRB) at my university requires that consent be obtained from students if the instructor intends to publish the data. The IRB approved my protocol, and I asked the selected students to fill out the survey/ consent form, save it, and send it back to me as an attachment.

I sent the e-mail and attachment to 20 randomly selected students from each of the previous seven sections (from fall 2006 to spring 2009) who had completed the nail polish assignment in my Introduction to Sociology sections. This gave me a potential sample size of 140. However, due to the vagaries of Blackboard (e.g., student names inexplicably missing from the e-mail list) and full student mailboxes, I ended up with a potential sample size of 103. I sent out three requests for participation every three weeks over the summer of 2009 and received 19 surveys, for an overall participation rate of 18 percent. Although the sample size is rather small, the response rate is better than the 10 percent response rate expected in old-fashioned mail surveys and has the advantage of being generalizable.

When students e-mailed me their filled-out survey/ consent forms, I could see their names. However, the survey/consent form itself has no student identification. I kept the students' data confidential by opening the attachments, printing them out, and putting each student's completed form in a paper file. This maintained student confidentiality, as the data were manually detached from the identifying e-mail.

Respondents evaluated the following four statements: The nail polish assignment helped me to (1) see the (socially constructed) relationship between gender and sexuality, (2) recognize how homophobia influences conformity to gender expectations and behavior, (3) empathize with people who do not have normative sexual identities, e.g., homosexuals, bisexuals, and transsexuals, (4) think about the concepts learned in this course. Students evaluated the statements using a 5-point Likert-type scale: 1 = strongly disagree, 2 = disagree, 3 = neutral, 4 = agree, 5 = strongly agree. As Table 1 illustrates, students generally regarded the nail polish assignment favorably, with average scores ranging from 3.37 to 4.26. The lowest score, 3.37, was on the statement about empathy for those who have nonnormative sexual identities. This score is disappointing in that it is barely on the upside of neutral, and helping students develop empathy is one of my main goals with this assignment. However, my expectations may be too high. It may be too much to ask that one assignment, in a survey course, overcome institutionalized heterosexuality, a central organizing feature of national life that relies on homophobia to sustain itself (Seidman 2003). Instead, this low score may point to the need to develop more teaching techniques that interrupt the homophobia inherent to everyday life and in our classrooms.

I also provided space on the survey for students to share any other information about the assignment. One student, who disagreed that the assignment helped her or him empathize with those with nonnormative sexual identities, said,

In relation to homosexuals and transsexuals, I cannot empathize as I am not one of them and cannot understand the process that leads them to this life style. I do not feel that putting on nail polish in any way brings me close to feeling the way they do, as part of their feelings are the need and perceived right to do this. One cannot be taught to understand another's thought process, only loosely understand the benefit to the other individual from it.

This is similar to what De Welde and Hubbard (2003) found in their coming-out letter exercise students would assert their heterosexuality and heterosexual privilege in the assignment. By mincing terms, this student wants to suggest that she or he could not possibly empathize with someone nonheterosexual because 'I am not one of them.'

However, another student, who was neutral on the empathy question, said, 'Seeing how society really constructs the identity of a man and woman was an eye opener. This assignment does really get you thinking about why we are the way we are and why is it that we are ridiculed for being 'non-normative' i.e., transsexuals, bisexuals, etc.'

The Main Complaint

Students, particularly male students, often lament, 'Why don't you make the girls [sic] do something?!' This opens up an opportunity for a rich discussion about gender and power. In response, I usually ask, 'What could women do to gender bend that would be as powerful and as temporary as nail polish?' Most often, men students say that I should make the women shave their heads. This never fails to astound me. This exercise puts men under so much pressure that they will seriously suggest that women do something that would take months and months to undo, while wearing nail polish can be undone in minutes. Students also suggest that I ask women not to shave their legs or underarms. This usually falls flat because other students aptly point out that not shaving is perfectly acceptable for 'hippy chicks,' some African American women, and some European women. I try to keep the discussion going by repeating the question, 'What could women do that would be as powerful, but as temporary, as nail polish is for men?' When the discussion has tapered off, I remind students that gender roles are stricter for men than for women and that women, as the subordinates in the gender hierarchy, have more leeway to 'act like men.' Men who act like women are ridiculed. I remind students, who have done the mall exercise (Boyle 1995) earlier in the semester, about the differentiation between toys appropriate for girls and those appropriate for boys and how boys are subject to much more ridicule for crossing the gender boundary than are girls.

Avoiding the Pitfall

The biggest impediment to this assignment is one of the very things it seeks to teach: homophobia. There is always a possibility that a male student or male nail polish partner of a student will be subject to emotional and/or physical abuse because of this assignment. A male student, while doing this assignment at a family Thanksgiving

dinner, was verbally threatened by his father about 'what happens to those kinds of people.' The coworkers of a student's husband harangued him so much at the auto parts store where he worked that he came home close to tears. Another student was reminded of a painful childhood in which he was continuously harassed about his gender by an older brother. In addition, this exercise may make students who do not in some way fit into the normative categories of gender and/or sexuality, for example, transgender, intersex, and/or gay students, uncomfortable. However, as suggested earlier, it may also be particularly interesting for those students, as it makes explicit the cultural logic under which they negotiate their own sense of self and place in society.

Although none of my students or their nail polish partners has—to my knowledge—ever been physically abused, it is always a distinct and frightening possibility. The possibility frightened me so much that after the above-mentioned incidents, I stopped using the assignment for a time. Then, I brought the assignment back as one of a number of possible assignments. In my Sociology 101 class, I offer four writing assignments and require that students complete three. This way, students can skip the nail polish assignment if it makes them terribly uncomfortable or if they cannot find a partner. In the spring of 2008, I broke my own rule, and all students had to do the nail polish assignment. This was because I wanted to add an assignment based on my university's newly instituted Book of the Year (T. C. Boyle's [1996] *Tortilla Curtain*). About a week before the assignment was due, I read on the Sociologists for Women in Society listserv about an eighth-grade boy in Oxnard, California, named Lawrence King who was shot by another eighth-grade boy (Saillant and Griggs 2008). King reportedly identified himself as gay, and in the months before his murder had started to accessorize with nail polish, makeup, and high-heeled boots. According to classmates, Lawrence had recently revealed to the shooter that he had a crush on him (Saillant 2008). Of course, I was horrified by the brutality of this crime. I was also worried, once again, about homophobic violence my students or their nail polish partners might encounter. The next day in class, I showed a picture from the news story about Lawrence King and talked about what happened to him. I had also hastily come up with an alternative nail polish assignment that did not involve nonnormative gender behavior for men; it just required writing about nonnormative behavior. About a third of the class ended up doing the alternative assignment. I thought that the men in my class might jump on the opportunity, but to my surprise, equal proportions of men and women did the original assignment and the alternative assignment. Based on student papers, I did not find that the alternative nail polish assignment was as powerful as the original. De Welde and Hubbard (2003) likewise argue that there is a qualitative difference between intellectually understanding the stigma of homosexuality and experiencing it, if only for a brief moment, even under artificial conditions. I once again resolved to use the nail polish assignment only when I could provide a choice of assignments.

Contextualizing the Assignment

The assignment asks students to describe the experience, using the interview questions provided as a guide. I grade students on how well they

describe their experience but not on the content of the experience itself. I also ask students to analyze the experience. For the analysis section of the assignment, students must find three terms or concepts, define them, and then say why their experience with the nail polish assignment exemplifies or fails to exemplify the term or concept. Students commonly choose terms such as gender, sexuality, homophobia, heterosexism, gender bending, gay bashing, norms, deviance, and sanction. For my Introduction to Sociology classes, I have relied heavily on the textbook that I use for that class, Andersen and Taylor's (2005), *Sociology: Understanding a Diverse Society*, which has excellent chapters on sex and gender, deviance, and sexuality. I have also used the film from Media Education Foundation *Tough Guise* (Jhally 1999), which does a brilliant job deconstructing masculinity and notes the homophobia inherent to dominant forms of American masculinity. Unfortunately, this film has become somewhat dated. I have more recently used *Hip-Hop: Beyond Beats and Rhymes* (Hurt 2006), another excellent film that has a more explicit class and race analysis of masculinity. Students draw on these sources when looking for terms to use for the analysis. Years ago, when I was developing this exercise in an Introduction to Women's Studies class, I used a reader titled *Feminist Frontiers IV* (Richardson et al. 1997), which has several appropriate articles, providing many terms and concepts helpful in providing analysis to this assignment. Particularly useful was the piece by

Pogrebin (1997), which lays out a very succinct explanation of the relationship between gender and homophobia: We want boys to act like boys and girls to act like girls because we think that then everyone will grow up to be heterosexual. This cultural logic is based on the notion that opposites attract and that homosexuality is the worst thing that can happen to someone. I draw on this piece for lecture and to prepare PowerPoint slides before the nail polish assignment is due. A discussion of Butler's (1991) heterosexual matrix would work well too. The most common mistake students make in the analysis section is to simply repeat the descriptive section. I spend some time in class, before the assignment is due, reminding students of the difference between description and analysis.

To help students get the connection between gender and homophobia and heterosexism, early in the semester I raise the question about what drives gender conformity. I schedule the nail polish assignment in the middle to the later part of the semester so that students have had a pretty good introduction to various aspects of gender, and especially gender socialization, by the time of the nail polish assignment. When I am teaching gender I ask the class things like, "Why do we care if girls act like girls and boys act like boys?" Most students will initially argue that gender differentiation is "natural," but after learning the sociological perspective on gender and especially after having done the mall exercise (Boyle 1995) students are more reluctant to argue this. The mall exercise introduces students to some of the ways, across the life course, that gender is constructed, reinforced, and policed. This is an eye-opening experience for students and discourages them from simplistically adopting a realist ontological stance toward gender. Occasionally a student will still argue that the gender observations made at the mall reflect natural differences, rather than constructing them, but most students are swayed by the evidence they themselves collect at the mall. After they have turned in the mall exercise and to set up the later nail polish assignment, I ask them, "If gender is natural, why do we work so hard to differentiate between men and women?" Several weeks later, when we get to the section on sexuality, I remind students of these questions to help them make the link between gender conformity and homophobia and heterosexism.

I have used the exercise off and on over the past eight years at the medium-sized public university in Alaska where I teach. I have mostly used this exercise in Introduction to Sociology classes, which I teach regularly, and I did use it in an upper-division Feminist Theory class that I have taught only once at this university. The sections of Introduction to Sociology almost always fill to their capacity of 48 but rarely have more than 40 students actually enrolled by the end of the semester. The Introduction to Sociology classes usually include more women (60 percent) than men (40 percent), although the numbers seem to be moving closer to parity. Most students take the class to fill a university general education requirement in the social sciences, although some students, like those in nursing, social work, and education, specifically need to take Introduction to Sociology for their degree programs.

CONCLUSION

I have used this exercise in Introduction to Sociology, Introduction to Women's Studies, and Feminist Theory classes. It would also be useful in classes on sociology of gender, social problems, and sexual politics. Although I have mostly used this exercise in introductory courses, when I used it in an upper-division feminist theory course students reported surprise and chagrin at the degree to which this exercise challenged their notions about gender and homophobia. "I thought I was beyond all that," one student said. The nail polish assignment is particularly effective if it comes after the mall exercise (Boyle 1995). The mall exercise illustrates for students the way that gender boundaries are constructed, enforced, and reiterated. The nail polish assignment can teach students about the underlying homophobia.

Although discussion of the assignment often elicits giggles from students when it is first introduced, it is a simple way to get students to think about the relationship between gender and homophobia and to develop at least some empathy for those with non-normative gender and/or sexual identities. Students are often unaware of the way that gender expectations are rooted in homophobia and the ways in which their own seemingly harmless and playful teasing about gender-nonconforming behavior contributes to a context of intolerance. As Eve Sedgwick (1988) has noted, heterosexuals have the 'privilege of unknowing,' and this exercise can be used to tease out the relationship between gender and sexuality and to sensitize students to the consequences of homophobia.

APPENDIX A

Nail Polish Assignment

Find a friend of the opposite gender and paint each other's nails with any color but clear nail polish. Each of you must wear the polish for at least 24 hours. Answer the following questions about the exercise and then interview your nail polish partner and record her/his answer to the same questions.

Questions 1–7: You answer for yourself

1. What color did you choose? Why?
2. Describe the painting of each other's nails.
3. What did you think when you first finished painting and looked at your hands?
4. How did you feel about yourself when you looked at your nails?

5. How did people react to your painted nails?
6. What did you think about their reaction?
7. How long did you wear the nail polish? If you removed it rather soon, what influenced your decision to do so?

Give a brief description of your partner and then ask her/him questions 8–14

8. What color did you choose? Why?
9. Describe painting each other's nails.
10. What did think when you first finished painting and looked at your hands?
11. How did you feel about yourself when you first looked at your hands?
12. How did people react to your painted nails?
13. What did you think about their reaction?
14. How long did you wear the nail polish? If you removed it rather soon, what influenced your decision to do so?

Write-up: Describe what happened and what the experience was like for you and for your partner. Write an analysis of what happened using at least three terms from the text book, films, or lectures.

APPENDIX B

Email to Solicit Respondents

The subject heading of the email read, "Sociology 101: The Nail Polish Assignment, [1st, 2nd, 3rd] request." The text of the email said:

Hello: You took Sociology 101: Introduction to Sociology from me in [] semester [].

One of the assignments for that class was the 'Nail Polish Assignment.' I would like to ask you some questions about that assignment. I will use your responses and those that I get from other students to write a paper for a journal called Teaching Sociology. If you are willing to participate, please open the attached document, fill it out, save it, and send the copy with your responses back to me. I will not keep track of who sent which sheet back so you can be assured that your responses are confidential. Thanks in advance.

APPENDIX C Survey/Consent

RESEARCH PROJECT: USING NAIL POLISH TO TEACH ABOUT GENDER AND HOMOPHOBIA

PRINCIPAL INVESTIGATOR: Nelta Edwards

CONSENT: I would like to ask you some questions about the 'Nail Polish Assignment' that you did in my Sociology 101: Introduction to Sociology course. I will use your responses and those that I get from other students to write a paper for a journal called Teaching Sociology. The responses from students will be added together so there will be no way that you will be individually identified. In addition, I will not keep track of who sent which sheet back so you can be assured that your responses are confidential.

If you are at least 18 years old and willing to participate, please put an 'X' on the appropriate line.

____ Yes, I would like to participate

SURVEY QUESTIONS: For each of the following questions, please type an 'X' on the response that most closely corresponds to your opinion.

The Nail Polish Assignment helped me to:

1. see the (socially constructed) relationship between gender and sexuality.
 ____strongly disagree ____disagree ____neutral ____agree ____strongly agree
2. recognize how homophobia influences conformity to gender expectations and behavior.
 ____strongly disagree ____disagree ____neutral ____agree ____strongly agree
3. empathize with people who do not have normative sexual identities, e.g., homosexuals, bisexuals, and transsexuals.
 ____strongly disagree ____disagree ____neutral ____agree ____strongly agree
4. think about the concepts learned in this course.
 ____strongly disagree ____disagree ____neutral ____agree ____strongly agree

5. Please feel free to share any other information about the assignment in the space below.

NOTE

The reviewers for this article were, in alphabetical order, Kristine DeWelde, Susan Ferguson, and Helen A. Moore.

Armchair Experiencing isn't as visceral as being there, safer and better than nothing

Education environments are required to meet high standards of safety. This precludes us from using real life experience of hazardous environments for most educational purposes. This is less of a limitation in informal educational situations, where adults may make informed decisions about risks that they might be willing to accept.

Nothing is better than complete happiness and a ham sandwich is better than nothing.

Therefore a ham sandwich is better than **complete happiness !!!**

Facing Reality is a challenge, even more so for someone else's reality.

The following article gives many suggestions that are fairly easily talked through, in a safe, casual armchair environment.

These issues may be used as themes and each individual situation verbalised to create a word picture in the minds of learners or group members. Of course, this lacks the outside world connections, that turn paper risks into life and death risks... These may be talked through, but privileged people may find it almost impossible to accept that such hazards exist in our society. Fragility is a huge challenge, that needs to be worked on, little piece by little piece....

If the course leader sees a situation as likely being too challenging for group members to stomach, then choose less threatening situations, that form a pattern leading up to the deep end of the pool. It may need many sessions, to work to the deep end of the pool. It may be necessary to provide a safe path for some attendees to bail out of challenging experiences.

Run the exercise through, for some childhood experiences shared by everyone, to illustrate what we are trying to achieve.

Buying petrol at petrol station for a man or woman....

Lipstick challenge or fingernail polish.....

Racial or class issues may be more challenging for some people, than gender issues. If so, then perhaps a gender example may be used to later lead to a racial or class issue?

But to get real, we have to build up to facing ugly reality, in the dangerous real world.

See Black Like Me by John Howard Griffin. That was high risk, self-directed, experiential learning. He of all people was highly empathic and could have learned better than most from safe observation, but he chose to jump in the deep end of the pool.

One situation may be explored from the viewpoint of each of the people involved. The **order** that viewpoints are explored is usually very important to enable participants to listen and learn most openly.

Film or music make it easy to re-explore but with **identifying** with different participants.

Usually learner active participation is essential to get right into the listened to identity – write a letter that xxxx might have written to yyyy to complain about their treatment. Verbally present your answer.

35 Things That Men and Women Experience Differently From Each Other



[David Graham](#)

Jul 22

<https://medium.com/the-knowledge-of-freedom/35-things-that-men-and-women-experience-differently-from-each-other-190c0eb5dc12>

9 min read

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Women don't have to worry about being seen as creeps, men don't have to be worried about being judged solely on their looks, and much more



Photo by [Hans Vivek](#) on [Unsplash](#)

There are many things that men and women can relate over, and one of those is just how different the experience of living can be for men and women. Here are 35 things men and women don't fully understand about each other because they seldom or never experience them themselves.

The majority of men will never experience what it's like to be afraid walking along the street just because a member of the opposite sex is walking behind you. The majority of women will never experience what it's like to know that the opposite sex may be intimidated by you just because you're walking along the street behind them.

Women will never experience the pain of what it's like to be hit in the balls. Men will never experience the pain of what it's like to be hit in the breasts.

The majority of men will never truly understand why women ask their friends if they want to go to the bathroom with them. The majority of women will never truly understand why men don't ask their friends if they want to.

The majority of women will never experience what it's like to not be treated as a member of the emotionally dominant sex of the dominant species on earth. The majority of men will never experience what it's like to not be treated as a member of the physically dominant sex of the dominant species on earth.

The majority of men will never experience what it's like to be judged so heavily based solely on your appearance that often it can feel like your entire worth is based upon your looks. The majority of women will never experience what it's like not to have the advantage of being able to rely upon your looks.

The majority of women will never experience what it's like to be judged so heavily based on how successful you are and how much money you make to the point it can feel like your entire worth comes down to your income. The majority of men will never experience what it's like to know that earning money and being successful could actually make you less attractive.

The majority of men will never experience what it's like to know that potentially the asset you can make the most money with is your body, and they will never experience the dangers that come with that knowledge. The majority of women will never experience what it's like not to be able to use sex as a failsafe and how difficult life can be without having that backup option available.

The majority of women will never experience what it's like to have everybody know very vividly that you are aroused, and to feel that fear of being visibly aroused. Men will never experience what it's like to have to manage periods.

The majority of straight men will never experience what it's like to be worried about getting jaw-lock while giving oral sex, regardless of the size. The majority of straight women will never experience what it's like to have no choice but to swallow every time you give oral sex.

Women will never experience what it's like to be afraid of ejaculating too quickly and ruining sex. The majority of men will never experience what it's like to wonder whether you will ever be able to consistently orgasm, even during solo masturbation.

The majority of men will never experience what it's like to be treated as spent goods just because you are not a virgin. The majority of women will never

experience what it's like to be seen as a loser and a failure because you are a virgin.

The majority of women will never experience what it's like to be seen as less of a person if you struggle to find sexual partners. The majority of men will never experience what it's like to feel dirty and be treated as dirty because you have engaged in promiscuous behaviour.

The majority of men will never experience what it's like to have society permanently expect you to have children. The majority of women will never experience what it's like to know that if you want a child, you need to find someone willing to carry it for you i.e. women need sperm donors, men need surrogates.

The majority of women will never experience what it's like to know that if you are caught even glancing at a member of the opposite sex, especially a young attractive member, you could be called a creep and plastered all over the Internet as a creepy perv. The majority of men will never experience what it feels like to always feel that people are looking at you and judging you based on your sexual appeal.

Men will never experience what it's like to not have the chance to be the greatest at a sport simply because of your sex i.e. due to men's physiological advantage, a man will always be the best on the planet at every sport. The majority of women will never experience what it's like to be seen as weak because you're not good at sports.

Women will never experience what it's like to know that if your partner cheats, you could end up raising a child that is not your own without knowing it i.e.

women always know a child is theirs, but for men, they take it on faith. Men will never experience what it's like to know that if you cheat, simply because of your sex, it will always be seen as a graver crime by everyone due to the higher level of potential betrayal involved i.e. paternity fraud through infidelity is the greatest crime that can be committed through infidelity, only a woman can commit it.

Men will never experience how amazing it is to have a child grow inside of them. The majority of women will never experience the freedom of being able to have a child without having to carry it themselves.

In a country where abortion is legal, women will never experience what it's like to know that your child could be terminated without your consent. In a country where abortion is illegal, men will never experience what it's like to know that you could be raped and impregnated and yet left with no choice but to see the pregnancy through.

The majority of men will never experience what it's like to be so well protected by society that you are expected to lock yourself away from any hint of danger, and if you don't you get persecuted for that fact. The majority of women will never experience what it's like to be expected to, if there is danger, throw yourself in front of it; and even if there is no danger, put your life second if there is a member of the opposite sex about.

The majority of women will never experience what it's like to have so few rights over your children that in most cases you have little chance of getting even joint custody in the case of separation or divorce, let alone full. The majority of men will never experience what it's like to not have the freedom to abandon your children and have no one bat an eyelid.

The majority of men will never experience what it's like to be expected by society to be amazing with children simply because of your sex. The majority of women will never experience what it's like to be seen as secondary parents simply because of your sex.

The majority of women will never experience what it's like to find it very difficult to get anyone to even be willing to go on a date with you, let alone have sex. The majority of men will never experience how difficult it is to know that if you want a date, you can get it easily get one, sex as well, which makes it even harder to get a date and sex due to how difficult it is to find a person with the right motives.

Men will never experience what it's like to have to worry while receiving oral sex about whether you are yeasty, your pH levels, how close you are to your period, whether you cleaned your ass properly after a number two, also, whether the person whose head is between your legs saliva will mess up your yeast and pH levels and give you a yeast infection or BV et cetera et cetera. Women will never experience what it's like to be worried over the size of your manhood.

The majority of women will never experience what it's like to be expected to be the one to make the first move, whether that be asking someone for a date, asking them for their hand in marriage, leading a conversation, et cetera et cetera. The majority of men will never experience what it's like to be expected not to ask a person out even if they want to, and to be expected to wait or instead throw hints to try to get a person to ask them out or ask them to marry them et cetera et cetera.

The majority of men will never experience what it's like to have to give up your name should you get married. The majority of women will never experience what it's like to be expected to spend a fortune on an engagement ring.

The majority of women will never experience what it's like to have people tell you that it's impossible for a member of the opposite sex to rape you. The majority of women will never experience what it's like to know that every time you go on a date your life genuinely could be at risk.

The majority of men will never experience what it's like to have people obsessed over their nipples and chest and all the negatives that come with that. The majority of women will never experience what it's like to not have people obsessed over their nipples and chests along with all the benefits that come with it.

The majority of women will never experience what it's like to be expected to pay for your date. The majority of men will never experience what it's like to fret over whether to let your date pay or whether to pay yourself due to the fear that if you let your date pay, they may expect sex.

The majority of men will never experience what it's like to be seen as the lesser but at the same time, the more important and thus less expendable sex i.e. society typically paints women as more important but somehow lesser than men. The majority of women will never experience what it's like to be seen as the greater, but at the same time less important and thus more expendable sex i.e. society typically paints men as less important than women and so more expendable but somehow greater.

The majority of women will never experience the feeling of being used that comes with paying for a date only to be sent packing at the end of it. The majority of men will never experience the feeling of being used that comes from letting a person pay, feeling obliged to have sex, having sex, and then being blown off afterward.

The majority of men will never experience what it's like to have people furious with you for walking to the shops alone at night. The majority of women will never experience what it's like to be treated as a predator just because of your sex, and to have society call for a curfew on your sex just because of that fact.

The majority of women will never experience what it's like to be expected to love sex and be seen as weak if you don't. The majority of men will never experience what it's like to be seen as a whore simply because you like sex and aren't shy about going after it.

The majority of men will never experience what it's like to be seen as cold-hearted just because you don't cry when people think you should. The majority of women will never experience what it's like to be seen as weak just because you have cried.

Final words

There are many things in this world that men and women experience differently, the more we talk about these differences the better the chances are that men and women will be able to start properly understanding each other again.

When that happens, and men and women once again get back onto the same page, the world becomes a better place for everyone.

P.S. if you can think of any more to add, feel free to do so in the comments.

That's all from me, thanks for reading! If you enjoyed this post, you may also enjoy the following:

[*Five Fascinating Facts about Human Nature That Will Blow Your Mind*](#)

[*The Three Main Reasons Why So Many Treat Modern Relationships as Expendable Items*](#)

[*30 Fascinating Facts About Humans That You Probably Didn't Know*](#)

12 years a slave - Film as immersive experience

'12 Years A Slave' Was A Film That 'No One Was Making'

October 24, 2013 1:33 PM ET

Heard on [Fresh Air](#)

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12 Years a Slave, starring Chiwetel Ejiofor, is based on an 1853 memoir by Solomon Northup, a free black man in upstate New York who was kidnapped into slavery in 1841.

Jaap Buitendijk/Fox Searchlight

The new movie *12 Years a Slave* has been receiving high praise — critic David Denby recently described it in *The New Yorker* as "easily the greatest feature film ever made about American slavery." The film is adapted from the 1853 memoir by Solomon Northup, who had been a free black man in upstate New York. A husband and father, he was a literate, working man, who also made money as a fiddler. But in 1841, after being lured to Washington, D.C., with the promise of several days' work fiddling with the circus, he was kidnapped into slavery. Over the next 12 years before finally winning his freedom, he became the property of a series of different plantation owners — one who was especially cruel and brutal. Director Steve McQueen and actor Chiwetel Ejiofor, who stars in the film, join *Fresh Air*'s Terry Gross to discuss the making of the movie. Filming in Louisiana lent "so many ideas and images," McQueen says. "One of the most horrible things happened in one of the most beautiful places."

Ejiofor's other films include *Dirty Pretty Things*, *Kinky Boots* and *Children of Men*. He's now starring in [Dancing on the Edge](#), the new Starz network series about a black band leader in London in the 1930s. McQueen's other films

include *Shame*, about a sex addict, and *Hunger*, based on the story of Bobby Sands, who died leading a hunger strike of imprisoned IRA members protesting their treatment.

Interview Highlights

On why they wanted to make the film

My father was a great believer in the ideas of an African diaspora — of a sense of unity amongst African people and people of African heritage, and that was the attitude I suppose that I grew up with: that we were all united in this.

Chiwetel Ejiofor

Steve McQueen: It was a film I wanted to see and no one was making it, so I thought to myself, "Well, I want to do this. I want to make this film." So it's one of those things where there's just a huge hole in the canon of cinema. It's such a big part of history, a huge part of American history that I thought, "That's a story I want to tell."

Chiwetel Ejiofor: My father was a great believer in the ideas of an African diaspora — of a sense of unity amongst African people and people of African heritage, and that was the attitude I suppose that I grew up with: that we were all united in this. ... Even though [we] were then spread across the world because of it. ... Being of Nigerian heritage and going over to Louisiana, you just start to feel connected to the whole sense of [slavery], to the international nature of it, to the complete absence of humanity that surrounded it.

More On 12 Years A Slave



MOVIE INTERVIEWS

['12 Years A Slave': 160 Years Later, A Memoir Becomes A Movie](#)



CODE SWITCH

['12 Years' Is The Story Of A Slave Whose End Is A Mystery](#)



MOVIE REVIEWS

[For A Free Spirit, A Grim '12 Years' In Chains](#)



CODE SWITCH

British Filmmakers Shift American 'Conversation On Race'



MOVIE INTERVIEWS

'12 Years' Star Alfre Woodard: 'You're Never Too Young For The Truth'

On adapting the memoir

McQueen: I had the idea of having a free man from the North ... who gets kidnapped and pulled into the maze of slavery. I liked the idea that the audience follows this person in every step that he takes within the context of slavery. ...

[My wife] found this book called *12 Years a Slave*, and I read this book, and I was totally stunned. It was like a bolt coming out of the sky; at the same time I was pretty upset with myself that I didn't know this book. ... Slowly but surely I realized that most people, in fact all the people I knew did not know this book. I live in Amsterdam where Anne Frank is a national hero. She's not just a national hero, she's a world hero, and for me this book read like Anne Frank's diary but written 97 years before — a firsthand account of slavery. I basically made it my passion to make this book into a film.

On Ejiofor's experience filming the movie's violent scenes

Ejiofor: [The violent scenes] are very necessary for us to understand Solomon's psychological journey to understand who he is, what he's endured, and in a wider sense, what people endured in that time. I think it gives audiences a chance to really understand the inner workings of what's happening. Those sequences ended up having a sense of privilege about them, actually, and I think if you're playing a real person you're always seeking to, in a way, legitimize your relationship with that person, to have the right to tell their story. I felt that sometimes when we were doing things that Solomon describes in the book that he went through and we were re-creating these moments as accurately as we could — and that would mean me being uncomfortable — what it meant was that it legitimized our relationship, and it made it easier for me to walk with him and tell his story.

Coup 53 Tells The Story Of A 1953 Campaign By MI6 And The CIA To Oust Iran's Leader

'Coup 53' Tells The Story Of A 1953 Campaign By MI6 And The CIA To Oust Iran's Leader

August 18, 2020 2:08 PM ET

<https://www.npr.org/2020/08/18/903505983/coup-53-tells-the-true-story-of-the-cia-s-campaign-to-oust-iran-s-leader>

Heard on [Fresh Air](#)



[JOHN POWERS](#)

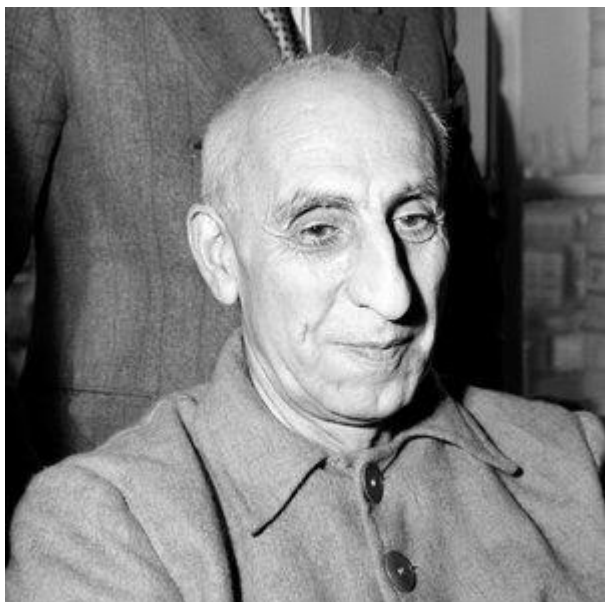


The new documentary *Coup 53* tells the backstory of the ouster of Mohammad Mosaddegh, Iran's elected prime minister. *Amirani Media*

The U.S. and Iran have had contentious relations ever since the Iranian Revolution in the late 1970s overthrowing the shah, and the subsequent hostage crisis — in which militants held 52 U.S. citizens for more than a year. Decades of scenes showing mobs burning the U.S. flag on the streets of Tehran have led many Americans to wonder why people in such a faraway country are so angry with the United States.

For an answer, you couldn't do better than to start with *Coup 53*, an exhilarating new historical documentary that unfolds with the pace and complexity of a thriller.

Co-directed by Taghi Amirani and renowned film editor Walter Murch, *Coup 53* tells the story of Operation Ajax, in which Britain's MI6 and the American CIA engineered the forcible removal of Mohammad Mosaddegh, Iran's elected prime minister. The shockwaves of this 1953 coup rattle our history to this day.



HISTORY

[Declassified Documents Reveal CIA Role In 1953 Iranian Coup](#)

Coup 53 is structured a bit like one of those [John Le Carré](#) spy novels in which George Smiley goes around talking to people to tease out who did what and when. We follow the likable Amirani over nearly a decade as he roots around for information, a quest that carries him from national security archives in D.C. and dusty basements in Paris, to glitzy apartments inhabited by moral monsters. Along the way he talks to CIA operatives, historians, espionage experts, TV cameramen, victims of Mosaddegh's ouster, beneficiaries of his ouster, and an array of ruling class Brits who are simply staggering in their complacency, racism and entitlement.

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[How The CIA Overthrew Iran's Democracy In 4 Days](#)

What emerges first is the backstory of the coup, which like so much in the modern Middle East is predicated on oil. Shortly after the black gold was discovered in early 20th century Iran, a British oil company now known as BP locked up a sweetheart deal for its exploitation. Iran not only got a mere 16% of the oil money before British taxes, but the books were kept by the British — and the Iranians weren't allowed to see them.

Naturally, Iranians resented this deal — and the British habit of treating them like animals. Mosaddegh was an erudite and charismatic Persian adored by the masses, and when he came to power, he nationalized the oil industry, expropriating the British oil company's assets.

The outraged British decided to take Mosaddegh down. Though America was at first reluctant — Harry Truman got along with Mosaddegh — Dwight Eisenhower's team of Cold Warriors wrongly saw this nationalist conservative as a potential tool of Moscow. He had to go.

How that happens is the heart of the film, which paints a fascinatingly detailed picture of how, in practical terms, you go about toppling a popular foreign leader. It all starts with spreading around money and maybe arranging a couple of assassinations. The key figure in the operation was a mysterious MI6 agent named Norman Darbyshire who talked to the media only once — for a TV series on the British Empire. But before it could air, the British government removed his interview from the program and sought to eliminate the transcript of his words.

But in *Coup 53*'s big discovery, Amirani unearths a photocopy of the original transcript and reenacts the interview with [Ralph Fiennes](#) brilliantly impersonating Darbyshire. For years, I thought the CIA was the prime mover of the coup, but I was wrong. Whether out of guilt or craftsman's pride, Darbyshire wanted the world to know the truth. He explains how he and the British choreographed the fall of Mosaddegh and blithely installed as prime minister the ghastly Gen. Fazlollah Zahedi — a notorious black marketeer who was believed to have conspired with the Nazis. Zahedi served at the whim of the then-young shah, whom the Americans considered gutless and spoiled but now backed to the hilt, even training his famously brutal secret police.

Britain and America had seemingly gotten what they wanted, including their cut of Iranian oil. But as *Coup 53* reminds us, history loves unintended consequences. Although the British ran the coup, the Americans immediately replaced them as the dominant foreign power in Iran. As for the shah, his harsh reign eventually spawned the Islamic Revolution, leading to more than 40 years of oppressive rule by mullahs who see the U.S., not Britain, as its prime enemy. Perhaps needless to say, they also took over Iran's oil industry — the reason for the coup in the first place.

Coup 53 review – riveting documentary on a very British coup

<https://www.theguardian.com/film/2020/aug/20/coup-53-review>



Ralph Fiennes in *Coup 53*. Photograph: Chris Morphet

This powerful and authoritative documentary by the Iranian film-maker Taghi Amirani

is as gripping as any thriller. *Coup 53* is about a vitally important historical event and horribly inglorious chapter in the postwar UK and US: the story of how, in 1953, Britain and the US teamed up to unseat the Iranian prime minister Mohammad Mosaddegh – who had nationalised British oil interests – and replace him with the skittish, preening and very biddable Shah of Iran. This cataclysmic meddling was the Book of Genesis in the bible of dirty tricks.

The coup emboldened the British to try the same in Egypt against Gamal Abdel Nasser over the Suez canal, and their humiliation there taught them that this sort of thing could not be attempted without a green light from the real imperial power: the US. The triumph in Iran was treated by the US as the equivalent of cold fusion. A miraculous and apparently risk-free way had been discovered to assert American interests without warfare and boots on the ground. The Mosaddegh

coup inspired them to destabilise governments all over the world. As for the British, the Iran coup was Britain's last gasp of imperial power, yet the official position is that this was an American show, and it has faded from the collective memory. Amirani doesn't mention it in his film, but Channel 4 journalist Jon Snow has revealed in [his conversations with Tony Blair](#) that it was plain the former prime minister had no idea who Mosaddegh was.

Coup 53 is the result of years of sleuthing from Amirani, and he has been helped by the legendary editor and sound editor [Walter Murch](#), who is co-writer. Also on board is actor [Ralph Fiennes](#). In a dramatic reconstruction, he plays real-life MI6 agent Norman Derbyshire, who in 1985 gave an interview to the Granada TV documentary *End of Empire* in which he rashly asserted that the whole thing was effectively being run by the British – by him, in fact. Coup 53 concludes that his appearance was cut at MI6's insistence but the transcript survived. Fiennes cleverly plays this amazing interviewee, as a kind of bluff Le Carré character. In fact, Amirani's film is rather reliant on the footage from that documentary, with its parade of plummy-voiced British establishment fossils, urbanely conceding that they did chuck out the Persians' tiresome democratically elected politician. But he also includes plenty of great interview footage of his own. If I had a criticism of this film, it is that – like so many historians of spies and spying – the director gets a little overexcited about the archive details. Still, what a riveting story: a grim curtain-raiser to today's tragedies.

This article was amended on 27 August 2020 to make clear that the suggestion UK authorities intervened to “cut” the Norman Darbyshire interview is the conclusion drawn by Coup 53; the producers of *End of Empire* maintain it was never intended for the MI6 agent to appear on camera.

Boys from the Blackstuff

This series shows the gritty reality of life in the UK, under Margaret Thatcher. One political commentator suggested that all Conservative MPs should be tied into chairs and forced to watch the series, so that they might know the realities of life in poverty, in the UK.

From Wikipedia, the free encyclopedia https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Boys_from_the_Blackstuff



Boys from the Blackstuff is a British [drama television series](#) of five episodes, originally transmitted from 10 October to 7 November 1982 on [BBC2](#).

The serial was written by [Liverpoolian](#) playwright [Alan Bleasdale](#), as a sequel to a television play titled *The Black Stuff*. The [British Film Institute](#) described it as a "seminal drama series... a warm, humorous but ultimately tragic look at the way economics affect ordinary people... TV's most complete dramatic response to the [Thatcher era](#) and as a lament to the end of a male, working class British culture."^[1]

The Black Stuff

The television play ***The Black Stuff*** was originally written by Bleasdale and directed by [Jim Goddard](#) for [BBC1](#)'s [Play for Today](#) anthology series in 1978. After filming however, the play was not transmitted until 2 January 1980.^[2] It concerned a group of [Liverpoolian tarmac](#) layers (hence the slang for tarmac: 'the black stuff') on a job near [Middlesbrough](#).

The acclaim that *The Black Stuff* received on its eventual transmission led to the commissioning of the sequel serial, of which Bleasdale had already written a considerable amount.

Boys from the Blackstuff

The series ***Boys from the Blackstuff*** follows the stories of the five now-unemployed men who lost their jobs following the events of the original play *The Black Stuff*. Set in Bleasdale's home city of Liverpool, and reflecting many of his own experiences of life in the city, each episode focuses on a different member of the group. The series was highly acclaimed for its powerful and emotional depiction of the desperation wrought by high unemployment and a subsequent lack of social support. Although Bleasdale wrote most of the episodes

before [Margaret Thatcher](#) came to power, the series was noted by many reviewers as a critique of the Thatcher era, which was seen as being responsible for the fate of many of the unemployed working-class, particularly in the [North of England](#). By early 1982, unemployment had reached 3,000,000 people (some one-eighth of the workforce) as a result of economic recession and restructuring of industry.^[3]

The character of [Yosser Hughes](#) was widely discussed. He was a man driven to the edge of his sanity by the loss of his job, his wife, the authorities' continued attempts to take his children away from him and his constant attempts at salvaging his male pride (often being the main give-away of his insecurity). His catchphrases, "Gizza' job!" ("give us a job") and "I can do that!" became part of the popular consciousness of the 1980s, summing up the mood of many who sought desperately for work during the era. Hughes was played by [Bernard Hill](#), who uses his [Mancunian](#) accent, with slight [Scouse](#) vocal mannerisms. The serial also helped to establish the career of [Julie Walters](#), who played the most prominent female role as Angie, the wife of Chrissie, played by [Michael Angelis](#).

The serial was made by the English Regions Drama department based at [BBC Birmingham](#) and was shot on location in Liverpool. The producer was [Michael Wearing](#), who was based at Birmingham with a specific remit to make "regional drama", and who would later be instrumental in bringing the BBC's drama serials [Edge of Darkness](#) (1985) and [Our Friends in the North](#) (1996) to the screens. The writer [Alan Bleasdale](#) went on to write the scripts for [The Monocled Mutineer](#) (BBC1, 1986) and [G.B.H.](#) ([Channel 4](#), 1991).

Reception

The series was so successful upon its original broadcast that only nine weeks after it had finished transmission, it was re-shown on the higher-profile BBC1. It was also transmitted again on [BBC2](#) as part of that station's twenty-fifth anniversary season in 1989. In 1983 it won the [British Academy Television Award](#) for Best Drama Serial, and in 2000 was placed seventh in a [British Film Institute](#) poll of industry professionals on the [best television programmes of the 20th century](#). It was also named as one of the forty greatest television shows in a 2003 list compiled by the [Radio Times](#) magazine's chief television writer Alison Graham. In March 2007, Channel 4 broadcast a "Top 50 Dramas" programme, based on input from industry professionals rather than the public, which had *Boys from the Blackstuff* at number two.^[4]

Episodes

The Black Stuff

The Black Stuff was the original television play directed by [Jim Goddard](#) and is the precursor to the 1982 *Boys from the Blackstuff* series. The main characters Yosser, Loggo, Chrissie, George, Dixie and his son, Kevin, were introduced in it. It follows the group as they set off from [Liverpool](#) to undertake a casual tarmac laying job on a new housing development in [Middlesbrough](#). The episode was produced in 1978 but was not broadcast until 1980.

Along the way at a motorway service station, the group encounter a female student ([Janine Duvitski](#)) who hitch-hikes a lift to [Leeds](#). Part of the group (particularly Yosser) mocks her, but Yosser's insecurity and unwillingness to be dominated by women is especially manifested after she taunts him when she is dropped off. In Middlesbrough, the group are approached by two [Irish](#) gypsies, Brendan and Dominic, who offer them the chance of a side job, claiming that they had been laid off. Although initially uneasy with the idea of working with them, the group (except group leader, Dixie and his son, Kevin), spurred by Yosser's dream of fleecing the gypsies and starting their own tarmac laying business, agree to invest vast amounts of their own savings to undertake the 'foreign' job. The group manager, McKenna, later discovers this and fires them all. However, despite being convinced that they had made the right decision, the group are nonetheless outsmarted by the gypsies who pretend they have been given a cheque (when in fact they had been paid cash) and claiming they would get the cheque cashed at a bank. Chrissie agrees to accompany Brendan in Brendan's van (who later manages to lose Chrissie by tricking him into pushing the van so as to jump-start it after pretending it had broken down), while Yosser decides to hold Dominic hostage until they return. Yosser soon discovers that cash had in

fact been handed over, but Dominic manages to escape to Brendan who is waiting for him – Loggo tripping and tumbling over as he gave chase through a farmer's field.

Yosser speeds off in the group's own van and gives chase to Brendan and Dominic, who attempts to puncture Yosser's tyres by smashing empty milk bottles on the road from the back of the van. Yosser swerves and avoids them, but runs out of petrol, shouting and venting his anger by bashing his head on the steering wheel. He finds a can of petrol in the back of the van, partly refuels and sets off in vain to find the pair, before giving up on a roundabout, bringing traffic on it to a halt and breaking down in tears, ignoring the tailback and horns being blown behind him. He returns to the group after stopping by where he had abandoned a number of items from the van, headbutting a man he believes to be an Irish gypsy and kicking his companion to the ground, who protests he is neither a gypsy nor Irish and was "just hitching a lift". Yosser is clearly distressed upon his return to the group and begins to smash the tarmac they had laid with a pickaxe, but is restrained by Loggo and Chrissie before knocking Chrissie to the ground for his optimistic outlook despite what has happened. Yosser launches an emotional monologue about wanting to be rich, noticed and seen, and is clearly close to breaking point, to the extent that Loggo and George continue to restrain him from further attacking Chrissie who is on the floor with a bleeding nose. George reassures Yosser and gently advises him to grow up, but Yosser is unconvinced and kicks the grille of the van. The episode ends with the group, almost penniless, arriving at the [Tees Transporter Bridge](#). A man whom they met earlier when he delivered tarmac to the site is on his way to [Shetland](#) to undertake a casual job there, and Loggo promptly chooses to join him. The episode finishes with a long-distance shot of the Tees Transporter Bridge and the opening theme song, sung by the cast, is played over the end credits.

The Muscle Market

Shown in 1981 as a standalone between the initial drama and the subsequent series, it centres on Danny Duggan (played by [Pete Postlethwaite](#)), the building boss who employs people cheaply by being complicit in the [social security fraud](#) of his employees and therefore guilty of a crime himself.

Jobs for the Boys

Featuring most of the characters from the initial drama. They take a cash-in-hand job on a building site whilst still claiming [unemployment benefit](#). Typical of the show's humour, it is later revealed that the building being renovated is going to be used by the [Department of Employment](#). They are followed by the authorities and Snowy Malone (Chris Darwin), a plasterer, falls to his death trying to flee during a subsequent raid by the "sniffers" (social security officers working undercover).

Moonlighter

Follows Dixie Dean ([Tom Georgeson](#)) in his new position as a security guard, where he is strongarmed into accepting bribes for allowing the removal of goods under his charge in a docked ship. Apart from Dixie's son Kevin this episode also features Chrissie, Loggo and George, the other members of the original gang, during a scene prior to Snowy Malone's (Chris Darwin) funeral.

Shop Thy Neighbour

Concentrates on Chrissie ([Michael Angelis](#)) and the domestic pressure that unemployment and the attentions of the benefit fraud officers place on him and his wife ([Julie Walters](#)). It also features his closest friend, Loggo ([Alan Iqbon](#)), who is least affected by the social climate. At the end of the episode, in an act of desperation, lacking money and food, Chrissie is driven to strangle and shoot his geese in an attempt to provide dinner. He also worries about his children's rabbits.

Yosser's Story

This is the most widely discussed episode of the series, following Yosser's struggle to avoid losing his children (who are played by Alan Bleasdale's own children) to the authorities as his mental health disintegrates. It is also the only one of the series shot on [16mm film](#), as opposed to [videotape](#), although the original play was also shot on this format. [Graeme Souness](#) and [Sammy Lee](#), then of [Liverpool F.C.](#), make cameo appearances in this episode. The episode contains the often repeated scene in which Yosser goes to confession looking for help, and tells the priest he is desperate. The priest, trying to comfort Yosser, tells him "Call me Dan – Dan"; to which Yosser replies "I'm [desperate, Dan](#)".

George's Last Ride

This episode reveals something of George's (Peter Kerrigan) politically active past. His trip (Chrissie wheeling him in his chair through the docks) leads him and them to reminisce about his younger days, the contrast between his recalled hopeful youth with the abandoned industrial infrastructure around him is marked. The death of George causes the main characters to be reunited if, in some cases, only briefly. The episode concludes with a surreal scene at the [Green Man](#) pub in Liverpool.

Fawlty Towers comedy

When choosing a film or an extract from a film, it is dangerous to be too serious. Many communications or relationship issues can be well illustrated in comedy. This can lighten up a class and help stop learners falling off their chairs in sleep (especially if they were expecting something boring or tedious!). Don't be too casual though !!!

From Wikipedia, the free encyclopedia https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Fawlty_Towers



Fawlty Towers is a British television [sitcom](#) written by [John Cleese](#) and [Connie Booth](#), broadcast on [BBC2](#) in 1975 and 1979. Two series of six episodes each were made. The show was ranked first on a list of the [100 Greatest British Television Programmes](#) drawn up by the [British Film Institute](#) in 2000 and, in 2019, it was named the greatest ever British TV sitcom by a panel of comedy experts compiled by the [Radio Times](#).^{[2][3]}

The series is set in Fawlty Towers, a fictional [hotel](#) in the seaside town of [Torquay](#) on the [English Riviera](#). The plots centre on the tense, rude and put-upon owner [Basil Fawlty](#) (Cleese), his bossy wife [Sybil](#) ([Prunella Scales](#)), the sensible chambermaid [Polly](#) (Booth) who often is the peacemaker and voice of reason, and the hapless and English-challenged Spanish waiter [Manuel](#) ([Andrew Sachs](#)). They show their attempts to run the hotel amidst farcical situations and an array of demanding and [eccentric](#) guests and tradespeople.

The idea of the show came from Cleese after he stayed at the [Gleneagles Hotel](#) in [Torquay](#), [Devon](#) in 1970 (along with the rest of the [Monty Python](#) troupe), where he encountered the eccentric hotel owner [Donald Sinclair](#). Stuffy and snobbish, Sinclair treated guests as though they were a hindrance to his running of the hotel (a waitress who worked for him stated "it was as if he didn't want the guests to be there"). Sinclair was the inspiration for Cleese's character Basil Fawlty.

In 1976 and 1980, *Fawlty Towers* won the [British Academy Television Award for Best Scripted Comedy](#). In 1980, Cleeve received the [British Academy Television Award for Best Entertainment Performance](#), and, in a 2001 poll conducted by [Channel 4](#), Basil Fawlty was ranked second on their list of the [100 Greatest TV Characters](#).^[4] The popularity of *Fawlty Towers* has endured, and it is often re-broadcast.^[2] The BBC profile for the series states that "the British sitcom by which all other British sitcoms must be judged, *Fawlty Towers* withstands multiple viewings, is eminently quotable ('[don't mention the war](#)') and stands up to this day as a jewel in the BBC's comedy crown."^[5]



[Gleneagles Hotel](#), Torquay in 2009. After staying there with the Monty Python team in 1970, the eccentric behaviour of owner [Donald Sinclair](#) inspired Cleeve to write the series.

Origins

In May 1970, the Monty Python comedy group stayed at the now demolished Gleneagles Hotel in Torquay, Devon while filming on location in Paignton.^[6] John Cleeve was fascinated with the behaviour of the owner, Donald Sinclair, later describing him as "the rudest man I've ever come across in my life".^[7] Among such behaviour by Sinclair was his criticism of Terry Gilliam's "too American" table etiquette and tossing Eric Idle's briefcase out of a window "in case it contained a bomb".^[8] Asked why would anyone want to bomb the hotel, Sinclair replied, "We've had a lot of staff problems".^[9] Michael Palin states Sinclair "seemed to view us as a colossal inconvenience".^[9] Rosemary Harrison, a waitress at the Gleneagles under Sinclair, described him as "bonkers" and lacking in hospitality, deeming him wholly unsuitable for a hotel proprietor. "It was as if he didn't want the guests to be there."^[10] Cleeve and his then wife Connie Booth stayed on at the hotel after filming, furthering their research of its owner.^[10] Demolished in 2015, the building was replaced by a new retirement home named Sachs Lodge in memory of Andrew Sachs who played Manuel in the sitcom and who died in 2016.^[11]

Cleeve was a writer on the 1970s British TV sitcom *Doctor in the House* for London Weekend Television. An early prototype of the character that became known as Basil Fawlty was developed in an episode ("No Ill Feeling") of the third *Doctor* series (titled *Doctor at Large*). In this edition, the main character checks into a small-town hotel, his very

presence seemingly winding up the aggressive and incompetent manager (played by Timothy Bateson) with a domineering wife. The show was broadcast on 30 May 1971.

Cleese said in 2008 that the first Fawlty Towers script he and Booth wrote was rejected by the BBC. At a 30th anniversary event honouring the show, Cleese said,

Connie and I wrote that first episode and we sent it in to Jimmy Gilbert, [the executive], whose job it was to assess the quality of the writing, said, (and I can quote [his note to me] fairly accurately,) "This is full of clichéd situations and stereotypical characters and I cannot see it as being anything other than a disaster." And Jimmy himself said, "You're going to have to get them out of the hotel, John. You can't do the whole thing in the hotel." Whereas, of course, it's in the hotel that the whole pressure cooker builds up.[13]

Cleese was paid £6,000 for 43 weeks' work and supplemented his income by appearing in television advertisements. He states, "I have to thank the advertising industry for making this possible. Connie and I used to spend six weeks writing each episode and we didn't make a lot of money out of it. If it hadn't been for the commercials I wouldn't have been able to afford to spend so much time on the script."

Plot directions and examples

The series focuses on the exploits and misadventures of short-fused hotelier Basil Fawlty and his acerbic wife Sybil, as well as their employees: waiter Manuel, Polly Sherman, and, in the second series, chef Terry. The episodes typically revolve around Basil's efforts to "raise the tone" of his hotel and his increasing frustration at numerous complications and mistakes, both his own and those of others, which prevent him from doing so.

Much of the humour comes from Basil's overly aggressive manner, engaging in angry but witty arguments with guests, staff and, in particular, Sybil, whom he addresses (in a faux-romantic way) with insults such as "that golfing puff adder", "my little piranha fish" and "my little nest of vipers". Despite this, Basil frequently feels intimidated, Sybil being able to cow him at any time, usually with a short, sharp cry of "Basil!" At the end of some episodes, Basil succeeds in annoying (or at least bemusing) the guests and frequently gets his comeuppance.

The plots occasionally are intricate and always farcical, involving coincidences, misunderstandings, cross-purposes and meetings both missed and accidental. The innuendo of the bedroom farce is sometimes present (often to the disgust of the socially conservative Basil) but it is his eccentricity, not his lust, that drives the plots. The events test to the breaking point what little patience Basil has, sometimes causing him to have a near breakdown by the end of the episode.

The guests at the hotel typically are comic foils to Basil's anger and outbursts. Guest characters in each episode provide different characteristics (working class, promiscuous, foreign) that he cannot stand. Requests both reasonable and impossible test his temper. Even the afflicted annoy him, as for example in the episode "Communication Problems", revolving around the havoc caused by the frequent misunderstandings between the staff and the hard-of-hearing Mrs. Richards. Near the end, Basil pretends to faint just at the mention of her name. This episode is typical of the show's careful weaving of humorous situations through comedy cross-talk. The show also uses mild black humour at times, notably when Basil is forced to hide a dead body and in his comments about Sybil ("Did you ever see that film, How to Murder Your Wife? ... Awfully good. I saw it six times.") and to Mrs Richards, ("May I suggest that you consider moving to a hotel closer to the sea? Or preferably in it.").

Basil's physical outbursts are primarily directed at Manuel, an emotional but largely innocent Spaniard whose confused English vocabulary causes him to make elementary mistakes. At times, Basil beats Manuel with a frying pan and smacks his forehead with a spoon. The violence towards Manuel caused rare negative criticism of the show. Sybil and Polly, on the other hand, are more patient and understanding toward Manuel; everyone's usual excuse for his behaviour to guests is, "He's from Barcelona"; Manuel even once used the excuse for himself.

Basil longs for a touch of class, sometimes playing recordings of classical music. In the first episode he is playing music by Brahms when Sybil remarks, after pestering him asking to do different tasks: "You could have them both done by now if you hadn't spent the whole morning skulking in there listening to that racket." Basil replies, with exasperation, "Racket?? That's Brahms! Brahms' Third Racket!" Basil often displays blatant snobbishness as he attempts to climb the social ladder, frequently expressing disdain for the "riff-raff", "cretins" and "yobbos" that he believes regularly populate his hotel. His desperation is readily apparent as he makes increasingly hopeless manoeuvres and painful faux pas in trying to curry favour with those he perceives as having superior social status. Yet he finds himself forced to serve those individuals that are "beneath" him. As such, Basil's efforts tend to be counter-productive, with guests leaving the hotel in disgust and his marriage (and sanity) stretching to breaking point.

The Selfish Giant

<https://mashable.com/article/best-independent-british-films>



The cinematography is just one reason to watch 'The Selfish Giant'. Credit: Film4

What's it about?

A scrap dealer who uses two troubled teenage boys to help him make money (it's also a retelling of an Oscar Wilde story).

Why should you watch it?

As you've probably guessed this is another fairly dark one, but it's also a moving story about childhood friendship and a comment on the way society treats teenagers who get labelled "difficult". It's also beautifully, beautifully shot.

<https://youtu.be/lvLxOKou7Nc> The Selfish Giant Trailer

Tyrannosaur

<https://mashable.com/article/best-independent-british-films>



Olivia Colman is stunning in 'Tyrannosaur'. Credit: Optimum Releasing

What's it about?

An angry widower becomes friends with a charity shop worker trapped in an abusive relationship.

Why should you watch it?

Most of the films on this list are challenging or uncomfortable to watch in some way, but *Tyrannosaur* is one you *really* need to brace yourself for. The themes of anger, violence, and domestic abuse are examined with such a blunt realism by writer/director Paddy Considine (yep, the main guy from *Dead Man's Shoes*) that the film is very, very tough going in places. So why should you watch it? Well the acting is incredible (especially the always-brilliant Olivia Colman), and despite [some critics labelling it "poverty porn"](#), I'd argue the film takes a close and challenging look at some important issues.

<https://youtu.be/nvyqXFmV-LI> Tyrannosaur | Official Trailer

Vera Drake - realities around abortion law enforcement

https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Vera_Drake



Theatrical release poster

Vera Drake is a 2004 British [period drama film](#) written and directed by [Mike Leigh](#) and starring [Imelda Staunton](#), [Phil Davis](#), [Daniel Mays](#) and [Eddie Marsan](#). It tells the story of a [working-class](#) woman in London in 1950 who performs illegal abortions. It won the [Golden Lion](#) at the [Venice Film Festival](#) and it was nominated for three Academy Awards and won three BAFTAs.

Plot

Vera Drake (Imelda Staunton) is devoted to her family, looking after her husband and children, her elderly mother, and a sick neighbour. Her shy daughter, Ethel (Alex Kelly), works in a lightbulb factory, and her son, Sid (Daniel Mays), tailors men's suits. Her husband, Stanley (Phil Davis), is a car mechanic. Although Vera and her family are poor, their strong family bonds hold them together. During her working day as a house cleaner, Vera performs constant small acts of kindness for the many people she encounters.

She is a kindly person who is eager to help others. Unknown to her family, she also works secretly, providing abortions for young women. She receives no money for providing this service because she believes that her help is an act of charity to women in trouble. However, her partner Lily (Ruth Sheen), who also carries on a black-market trade in scarce postwar foodstuffs, charges two guineas (two pounds and two shillings: equivalent to £73 in 2021) for arranging the abortions, without Vera's knowledge.

The film also contains a subplot about an upper-class young woman, Susan (Sally Hawkins), the daughter of one of Vera's employers. Susan is raped by a suitor, becomes pregnant, and asks a friend to put her in contact with a doctor, through whom she can obtain an abortion. The doctor refers her to a psychiatrist, who prompts her to answer questions in a certain way, so that he can legally recommend an abortion on therapeutic psychiatric grounds: that she has a family history of mental illness and that she may commit suicide if not allowed to terminate the pregnancy. The abortion costs her a hundred guineas.

After one of her patients nearly dies, Vera is arrested by the police and taken into custody for questioning. She is held overnight and appears before a magistrate the next morning. Sid is shocked by his mother's secret activities and tells his father that he does not think that he can forgive her. However, in a later conversation with Vera, he expresses fear for what could happen to her in prison, before finally telling Vera that he loves her.

Vera is bailed to appear at the Old Bailey. None of Vera's employers will give her a character reference. Her solicitor thinks she will receive the minimum sentence of 18 months in jail; the judge sentences her to two and a half years imprisonment "as a deterrent to others." This affects all the people who previously depended on Vera's kindness.

While in prison, Vera meets others who have been convicted of performing illegal abortions. They discuss their sentences, explaining that it's not their first time in prison for performing illegal abortions, and that she'll probably only serve half her sentence. Vera tearfully leaves to go to her cell.

Background

In *Vera Drake*, Leigh incorporated elements of his own childhood. He grew up in north Salford, Lancashire, and experienced a very ordinary but socio-economically mixed life as the son of a doctor and a midwife. In the book *The Cinema of Mike Leigh: A Sense of the Real*, Leigh said, "I lived in this particular kind of working-class district with some relations living in slightly leafier districts up the road. So there was always a tension, or at least a duality: those two worlds were forever colliding. So you constantly get the one world and its relationship with the other going on in my films."

Production

Mike Leigh is known to use unusual methods to achieve realism in his films. "Leigh's actors literally have to find their characters through improvisation and research the ways people in specific communities speak and behave. Leigh and his cast immerse themselves in the local life before creating the story" (1994: 7: Watson 29). Critic Roger Ebert explains:

His method is to gather a cast for weeks or months of improvisation in which they create and explore their characters. I don't think the technique has ever worked better than here; the family life in those cramped little rooms is so palpably real that as the others wait around the dining table while Vera speaks to policeman behind the kitchen door, I felt as if I were waiting there with them. It's not that we 'identify' so much as that the film quietly and firmly includes us.

Leigh often uses improvisation to capture his actors' unscripted emotions. When filming *Vera Drake*, only Imelda Staunton knew ahead of time that the subject of the film was abortion. None of the cast members playing the family members, including Staunton, knew that Vera was to be arrested until the moment the actors playing the police knocked on the door of the house they were using for rehearsals. Their genuine reactions of shock and confusion provided the raw material for their dialogue and actions.

In addition to these methods utilised by Mike Leigh, the director is also admired for his preference of English actors to Hollywood stars. This has led to criticism of Leigh as being a patroniser of the working class.[5] However, using Dickens in his defence, he rebuts these accusations outright proclaiming that the last thing he seeks in his actors is a stereotype. This stereotype was fiercely criticised in the film, *Vera Drake*:

These abiding quibbles aside, *Vera Drake* is a compelling and complex film. Though much has been made of the controversial subject matter – back street abortion – its main theme is the buried family secret, the ticking time bomb that can lurk underneath even the most stable marriage. Much of the film's cumulative power lies in its delineation of a rock solid family suddenly rocked to the core by a revelation that is literally beyond their comprehension: the fact that their beloved, and loving, mother is an abortionist. Why, I ask Leigh, does she keep her secret for so long?

Critical response

The film has attracted some criticism from those who worked in midwifery during the 1950s. The chief concern is the method of abortion used by *Vera Drake* in the film. This involves using a Higginson bulb, which is a type of enema syringe, to introduce a warm, dilute solution of carbolic soap and an unspecified liquid disinfectant into the woman's uterus. This method is claimed by Jennifer Worth, a nurse and midwife in the 1950s and 1960s and author of the book *Call the Midwife*, to be invariably fatal. She called the film itself "dangerous", as it could be shown in countries where abortion is illegal and the method depicted copied by desperate women.

The website Metacritic, which compiles and averages reviews from leading film critics, gave it a score of 83 out of 100 from 40 reviews. Review aggregator Rotten Tomatoes gives the film an approval rating of 92% based on 160 reviews, with a rating average of 7.9/10. The site's consensus is that, "with a piercingly powerful performance by Imelda Staunton, *Vera Drake* brings teeming humanity to the controversial subject of abortion

Under the Skin– very freaky, very scary, very erotic - surreal - moral ethics responsibility communication

The use of surreal material is probably fairly high risk, in that different learners may take quite different conclusions from listening to this material. The leader will probably need to check fairly carefully and discuss with the group the breadth of issues that may arise. Fools rush in, where angels fear to tread? For these reasons, the leader should consider safe prototyping ie to run a test session with either fellow leaders, or perhaps with more mature or experienced learners. Then to carefully evaluate outcomes, soon after completion and also perhaps after the passage of significant time. Caution is wise. Completely unexpected themes might arise, in some learners, so getting advice from other experienced leaders is possibly essential too. Provision of safe backout might also be essential.

Under the Skin review – very freaky, very scary, very erotic

Jonathan Glazer's sci-fi horror-flick, starring Scarlett Johansson as an extraterrestrial roaming Glasgow in a white van, picking up men, is visually stunning and deeply disturbing

<https://www.theguardian.com/film/2014/mar/13/under-the-skin-scarlett-johansson-peter-bradshaw>



Absurdist ... Scarlett Johansson in Under the Skin. Photograph: Allstar/FILM4/Sportsphoto Ltd./Allstar



Peter Bradshaw

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Thu 13 Mar 2014 15.00 GMT

It sure as hell got under mine. Jonathan Glazer's sci-fi horror is loosely adapted, or atmospherically distilled, by Walter Campbell from the 2000 novel by Michel Faber. The result is visually stunning and deeply disturbing: very freaky, very scary and very erotic. It also comes with a dog-whistle of absurdist humour that I suspect has been inaudible for some American reviewers on the international festival circuit so far.

The heroine is an alien predator at large in Scotland. Maybe you have to be a Scot, or anyway a Brit, to appreciate Glazer's masterstroke in casting Scarlett Johansson as the exotic alien in humanoid form, with her soft London accent, tousled black wig and sexy fake fur, driving a knackered white van around the tough streets of Glasgow, picking up men. She winds down the passenger-side window, artlessly engages them in conversation, and takes them back to her place. Between encounters, she roams, gazing at streetscapes, and making them alien with that gaze – like a Craig Raine poem. At one stage, she and her van are surrounded by guys with Celtic scarves. She is the ultimate Rangers supporter.

There is pure situationist genius in the bizarre spectacle of sleek Johansson being placed in this context, with lots of hidden-camera shots of real passers-by in real Glasgow streets and real Glasgow shopping centres, all these people being coolly sized up and assessed for their calorific value. From these genuine crowds, professional actors will seamlessly emerge for dialogue scenes. You can never forget it is Johansson on the screen, and that is surely the point. A Hollywood A-lister is as much of an alien here as any extraterrestrial from a flying saucer. (The final credits reveal that as well as a personal assistant, Johansson had a "personal security" team. I wonder if they were called upon at any point.) Her alien is voluptuous, superbly insouciant, unaffected by her surroundings – though I think feeling the cold a tiny bit. She greets the stunned menfolk with an unreadably polite half-smile. This is how I imagine Elizabeth Taylor to have looked and behaved when Richard Burton first took her to Port Talbot.

The story of Johansson's alien begins with a mysterious and Kubrickian "birth" scene in a brilliantly rendered dimensionless otherworld. The alien is transferred to Scotland's dark, rainy streets and it – she – appears to have a minder, who rides a motorbike, and secures for her a human bodyshape from a dead girl retrieved from the roadside. Or perhaps that is another expired alien whose shape is being reused. At any rate, our alien is soon up and running in her **Ford Transit**, seducing wide-eyed males who can't believe their good luck and are quite right not to.

At the seashore, she witnesses a complex "rescue" scene in which earthling emotions of pity and compassion are on display – feelings she does not share. The most staggering scene is one in which the alien picks up a young man with the facial disfigurement of neurofibromatosis, played by Adam Pearson. The alien does not essentially distinguish between his looks and those of her other victims, but there is a crisis, and the alien becomes vulnerable: a potential victim herself.



Under the Skin

Glazer has stylishly absorbed the influences of **Nic Roeg** and **David Lynch**, with something of **Gaspar Noé** in the hardcore moments and maybe an echo of **Bertrand Tavernier's** Glasgow film **Death Watch**. There are memories of **An American Werewolf in London** and even, in the alien's loneliness, a touch of **ET**. But Glazer places his film in such a different and unexpected locale: in tough city streets more associated with **Andrea Arnold** or **Ken Loach**. The quicksilver shapes of futurist bodyhorror fantasy are scuffed with social-realist grit, but modified, too, with Jonathan Glazer's brilliant flair for visual impact. And I'm someone who still watches this director's horses-in-the-surf Guinness commercial on YouTube and gasps. His previous films **Sexy Beast**

(2000) and *Birth* (2004) had more conventional twisty plots. This is a pure intravenous injection of mood.

And what is that alien doing anyway? Just eating? Or is she the advance party of a colonising power that has conquered England and is coming north? Johansson's alien has clearly hit a Hadrian's Wall of trouble in these misty lands and found that the Scots are not so easy to subdue.

At the press screening, the final credits were greeted by a sudden nasal exhalation from us critics: the sound of people realising they have been holding their breath. It's the equivalent of regular audiences jumping to their feet and applauding.

https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Asghar_Farhadi



Farhadi at the 2018 Stockholm International Film Festival

Asghar Farhadi (Persian: اصغر فرهادی, [æsgær ɛ færhɑːdiː] listen[ⓘ]; born 7 May 1972)^[1] is an Iranian film director and screenwriter. He has received critical acclaim for his international films which focus on the human condition as well as portray intimate and challenging stories of internal family conflicts. His films include the dramas *About Elly* (2009), *A Separation* (2011), *The Past* (2013), *The Salesman* (2016), *Everybody Knows* (2018), and *A Hero* (2021).^[2]

Farhadi's films *A Separation* (2011) and *The Salesman* (2016) are both recipients of the **Oscar** for **Best Foreign Language Film**, making him one of the few directors worldwide who have won the category twice. He also received the **Cannes Film Festival Award for Best Screenplay** for his film *The Salesman*. In 2021, he received the **Cannes Film Festival's Grand Prix** for his film *A Hero*.

In 2012, he was included on the annual *Time 100* list of the most influential people in the world.^[3] That same year he also received the **Legion of Honour** from France.

Early life

Farhadi was born in Homayoon Shahr, a city located in the Isfahan Province near the city of Isfahan.[4] At the age of 15, in 1987, he joined the Isfahan branch office of the Iranian Youth Cinema Society, which had been established for 4 years earlier and he made several short films.[5] He is also a graduate of theatre, with a BA in dramatic arts and MA in stage direction from University of Tehran and Tarbiat Modares University, respectively.

Early films

At the start of his career, Farhadi made numerous short [8 mm](#) and [16 mm](#) films in the Isfahan branch of the Iranian Young Cinema Society, before moving on to writing plays and screenplays for [IRIB](#). He also directed such TV series as *A Tale of a City* and co-wrote the screenplay for [Ebrahim Hatamikia's](#) *Low Heights*. In 2003, Farhadi made his feature film debut with *Dancing in the Dust*.^[7] He followed with *The Beautiful City*, released in 2004. His third film, *Fireworks Wednesday*, won the Gold Hugo at the 2006 [Chicago International Film Festival](#).

About Elly (2009)

In 2009, Farhadi directed his fourth film, *About Elly*, won him the [Silver Bear for Best Director](#) at the 59th International [Berlin Film Festival](#) and also Best Picture at the [Tribeca Film Festival](#). The latter film is about a group of [Iranians](#) who take a trip to the Iranian beaches of [Caspian Sea](#) that turns tragic. [Film theorist](#) and critic [David Bordwell](#) has called *About Elly* a masterpiece.

A Separation (2011)

His film *A Separation* premiered on 9 February 2011 at the 29th [Fajr International Film Festival](#) in [Tehran](#) and received critical acclaim from the Iran Society of Film Critics. It earned Farhadi four awards including Best Director (for the third time after *Fireworks Wednesday* and *About Elly*). On 15 February 2011, it also played in competition at the [61st Berlin International Film Festival](#), which received a [Golden Bear](#) for best film, becoming the first Iranian film to win that award. In June 2011, *A Separation* won the [Sydney Film Prize](#) in competition with [Cannes Festival's](#) winner *The Tree of Life*, directed by [Terrence Malick](#).^[9] It also won the Best Film award at the 2011 [Asia Pacific Screen Awards](#).

On 19 December 2011, Farhadi was announced as being a [jury](#) member for the [62nd Berlin International Film Festival](#), which was held in February 2012

On 15 January 2012, *A Separation* won the [Golden Globe](#) for the Best Foreign Language Film.^[11] The film was also the official Iranian submission for the [Best Foreign Language Film](#) at the [2012 Academy Awards](#) where, in addition to being [nominated](#)^[12] in this category, it was also nominated in the [Best Original Screenplay](#) category. On 26 February 2012, *A Separation* became the first Iranian movie to win the [Academy Award for Best International Feature Film](#), at the [84th Academy Awards](#). This marked Farhadi as the first Iranian to have won an [Academy Award](#) in any of the competitive categories.^[13] He was invited to join the [Academy of Motion Picture Arts and Sciences](#) in June 2012, along with 175 other members.^[14] *A Separation* also won the [César Award for Best Foreign Film](#) and the [Independent Spirit Award for Best International Film](#) in 2012.

The Past (2013)



Farhadi, [Berenice Bejo](#) and the cast of *The Past* at the [2013 Cannes Film Festival](#)

In 2013, Farhadi's film *The Past* starring [Bérénice Bejo](#) and [Tahar Rahim](#) was released. This would be Farhadi's first film in the French language. The film competed for the [Palme d'Or](#) at the [2013 Cannes Film Festival](#).^[15] Bejo won the [Best Actress Award](#) at Cannes for her performance in the film.

The film received universal critical acclaim. It holds a 93% "certified fresh" rating on [review aggregator](#) website [Rotten Tomatoes](#), based on 144 reviews with a [weighted average](#) score of 8.2/10 and the site's consensus: "Beautifully written, sensitively directed, and powerfully acted, *The Past* serves as another compelling testament to Asghar Farhadi's gift for finely layered drama."^[18] On [Metacritic](#), the film has a [normalized score](#) of 85 out of 100 based on 41 reviews, indicating "universal acclaim".

The film was selected as the Iranian entry for the [Best Foreign Language Film](#) at the [86th Academy Awards](#), but it was not nominated.

The Salesman (2016)

His 2016 film *The Salesman*, starring [Shahab Hosseini](#) and [Taraneh Alidoosti](#), competed for the [Palme d'Or](#) at the [2016 Cannes Film Festival](#), where it won two awards: [Best Actor](#) for Shahab Hosseini and [Best Screenplay](#) for Farhadi.^[20]

On 26 February 2017, Farhadi won his second Oscar for [Academy Award for Best International Feature Film](#) for *The Salesman* at the [89th Academy Awards](#). *The Salesman* had already won the award for the [Best Screenplay](#) at the [Cannes Film Festival](#). Following Donald Trump's [executive order](#) barring Iranians from entering the country, Farhadi said he would not attend the 2017 Academy Awards, despite being nominated, and then winning, for the best foreign-language film.^[21] He announced that two prominent Iranian Americans, [Anousheh Ansari](#) and [Firouz Naderi](#) would represent him in the ceremony.^[22] Anousheh Ansari is famed for being the first female space tourist and first Iranian in space, and Naderi as director of Solar Systems Exploration at [NASA](#).^[23] A few hours before the ceremony, he addressed a group of protesters in London via a video link from Iran. The Mayor of London, [Sadiq Khan](#), screened the movie publicly in [Trafalgar Square](#) as a celebration of the city's diversity.^[24] "This solidarity is off to a great start", he told them. "I hope this movement will continue and spread, for it has within itself the power to stand up to fascism, be victorious in the face of extremism and say no to oppressive political powers everywhere."^[25]

After winning the [Academy Award](#) for the second time, Farhadi had a prepared statement read by [Anousheh Ansari](#). "I'm sorry I'm not with you tonight", Farhadi's statement read. "My absence is out of respect for the people of my country and those of the other six nations who have been disrespected by the inhumane law that bans entry of immigrants to the U.S. Dividing the world into the us and our enemies categories creates fear, a deceitful justification for aggression and war. These wars prevent democracy and human rights in countries which themselves have been victims of aggression. Filmmakers can turn their cameras to capture shared human qualities and break stereotypes of various nationalities and religions. They create empathy between us and others -- an empathy that we need today more than ever." Prior to the ceremony, all five directors nominated for foreign language film issued a joint statement, obtained by [USA Today](#), that condemned "the climate of fanaticism and nationalism" in the United States, among other countries. The directors – Farhadi, [Maren Ade](#) (*Toni Erdmann*), [Hannes Holm](#) (*A Man Called Ove*), [Martin Zandvliet](#) (*Land of Mine*) and [Bentley Dean](#) and [Martin Butler](#) (*Tanna*) – said that no matter which films wins, the Oscar is dedicated to "all the people, artists, journalists and activists who are working to foster unity and understand, and who uphold freedom of expression and human dignity – values whose protection is now more important than ever."^[26]



Javier Bardem, Penélope Cruz, Farhadi and the cast of *Everybody Knows* at the 2018 Cannes Film Festival

Everybody Knows (2018)

In 2018, Farhadi directed his eighth feature film titled, *Everybody Knows* starring Javier Bardem, Penélope Cruz and Ricardo Darin. The film, a Spanish psychological thriller debuted at the 71st Cannes Film Festival where it played in competition for the Palme d'Or.

At the Toronto premiere of *Everybody Knows*, the director shared with *Ikon London Magazine* his plans to "Come to London West End with his play". He said "I know there is a lot of great plays every day. And I wish one day I do a play there. It is not far. It is our plan."^[27]

The film has earned critical acclaim earning a 78% on *Rotten Tomatoes*, with critics praising the two leads, but adding that the film is below Farhadi's usually high standards.^[28]

A Hero (2021)

A Hero is Farhadi's 9th feature film. Alexandre Mallet-Guy co-produced the work. This film was shot in Shiraz, Iran, and narrates a social theme. In this film, Amir Jadidi, Mohsen Tanabandeh, Fereshteh Sadr Orafaei, Sarina Farhadi and Sahar Goldoust play roles. The film was introduced as the representative of Iranian cinema on October 20, 2021, to compete in the 94th Academy Awards.^[29]

In 2022, Farhadi was indicted by an Iranian court on charges of plagiarism for allegedly stealing the premise for *A Hero* from an earlier documentary made by Azadeh Masihzadeh, a former film student of Farhadi.^[30]

Themes

Social and class structures

Farhadi's films present a microcosm of modern Iran and explore the inevitable complications that arise via class, gender, and religious differences. For example, his 2011 film *A Separation* portrays various intractable conflicts and arguments that force the characters to reflect on the moral grounds of their own decisions.

In her article, "Through the Looking Glass: Reflexive Cinema and Society in Post-Revolution Iran", Norma Claire Moruzzi writes:

In contrast, Farhadi's *A Separation* treats the life-as-elsewhere dream as one strand of a complex and multi-layered story. Farhadi's films are nuanced portraits of the cross-cutting relations among classes, genders, and social groups. They are ambivalent explorations of the implications small personal choices can have on the delicate web of individual connections that make up any social network, carefully crafted and beautifully acted.^[31]

The film critic [Roger Ebert](#) in his Movie Yearbook 2013 writes this about Farhadi's craft depicting social relations:

"The writer-director, Asghar Farhadi, tells his story with a fair and even hand. His only agenda seems to be to express empathy. [A Separation](#) provides a useful portrait of Iran today . . . [T]his film portrays a more nuanced nation, and its decent characters are trying to do the right thing" (532). "The intriguing thing about his screenplay is that it gets us deeply involved, yet never tells us who it thinks is right or wrong" (703)

In the introduction to her 2014 book *Asghar Farhadi: Life and Cinema*, film critic Tina Hassannia writes:

[Farhadi's] social realism—observations on the culture at large driven through a documentary-like lens—is skilfully effaced by a highly refined version of the melodrama. Yet his social commentary—though bleak, sometimes damning—never feels didactic or punishing.

In Farhadi's films, Iran is depicted as having a rigid class system that endures across the history of pre- and post-revolutionary Iran. Farhadi films the complexities of everyday life in contemporary Iran, with a particular focus on the ways in which diverse perspectives are embedded within social structures such as class and gender. Farhadi has his own style like "open ending movies", being realistic and "narrative gaps".^[34]

Cultural norms

Farhadi's films frequently criticize divisions in Iranian society along class, gender and religious lines. However, they are notable for their subtlety of treatment. Farhadi himself has never rejected Iran, most of his films are deeply rooted in urban Iranian society, and he has frequently expressed his commitment to the country and its people, most notably on the two occasions when he won the [Academy Award](#). When he picked up the award for *A Separation*, he dedicated the win to the Iranian nation. When *The Salesman* won the prize a few years later, Farhadi declined to attend the event in protest at the policies of the American administration.

What is less noticed is his veiled criticism of religious standards in Iran. His debut feature [Dancing in the Dust](#) opens with the Islamic invocation *Bismillahir Rahmanir Rahim* (*In the name of Allah, the most benevolent, the most merciful*) just as a hand cleans a car window to reveal a large statue of a man, situated on a pedestal in a street. Idolatry is forbidden in Islam, and the construction of human statues likewise discouraged in strict interpretations. For his second film, [Beautiful City](#), Farhadi repeated a similar cinematic trick; as a prison microphone blares out the [Bismillah](#) phrase, it is revealed that a young man is carving human figurines. Neither film has been released in the West, and they have not been seen as widely as his latter films.^[35]

Best to read the whole article https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Asghar_Farhadi

Mira Nair Indian filmmaker

https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Mira_Nair

Mira Nair (born 15 October 1957) is an Indian filmmaker based in New York City.^[1] Her production company, **Mirabai Films**, specializes in films for international audiences on Indian society, whether in the economic, social or cultural spheres. Among her best known films are *Mississippi Masala*, *Kama Sutra: A Tale of Love*, *The Namesake*, the Golden Lion–winning *Monsoon Wedding*, and *Salaam Bombay!*, which received nominations for the Academy Award for Best Foreign Language Film and the BAFTA Award for Best Film Not in the English Language.

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Career

Before she became a filmmaker, Nair was originally interested in acting, and at one point she performed plays written by **Badal Sarkar**, a **Bengali performer**. While she studied at Harvard University, Nair became involved in the theater program and won a Boylston Prize for her performance of *Jocasta's* speech from *Seneca's Oedipus*.

Nair commented on film-making in a 2004 interview with FF2 Media's Jan Huttner:

It's all in how I do it. Keeping the buns on the seats is very important to me. It requires that ineffable thing called rhythm and balance in movie-making. Foils have to be created, counter-weights. From the intimacy, let's say, of a love scene to the visceral, jugular quality of war. That shift is something in the editing, how one cuts from the intimate to the epic that keeps you there waiting. The energy propels you.^[6]

Nair said to *Image Journal* in 2017 that she chose directing over any other art form because it was collaborative. "That's why I am neither a photographer nor writer," she said. "I like to work with people, and my strength, if any, is that. Working with life."

Documentaries

At the start of her film-making career, Nair primarily made documentaries in which she explored Indian cultural tradition. For her film thesis at Harvard between 1978 and 1979, Nair produced a black-and-white film titled *Jama Masjid Street Journal*. In the eighteen-minute film, Nair explored the streets of **Old Delhi** and had casual conversations with Indian locals.

In 1982, she made her second documentary titled *So Far from India*, which is a fifty-two-minute film that followed an Indian newspaper dealer living in the subways of New York, while his pregnant wife waited for him to return home.^[3] This film was recognized as a Best Documentary winner at the **American Film Festival** and New York's Global Village Film Festival.

Her third documentary, *India Cabaret*, released in 1984, revealed the exploitation of female strippers in **Bombay**, and followed a customer who regularly visited a local strip club while his wife stayed at home.^[5] Nair raised roughly \$130,000 for the project. The 59-minute film was shot over a span of two months. It was criticized by Nair's family.^{[2][3]} Her fourth and last documentary, made for **Canadian television**, explored how **amniocentesis** was being used to determine the sex of fetuses. Released in 1987, *Children of a Desired Sex* exposed the aborting of female fetuses due to society's favoring male offspring.¹

In 2001, with The Laughing Club of India, she explored **laughter based on yoga**. Founder Dr. Madan Kararia spoke of the club's history and the growth of laughing clubs across the country, and subsequently the world. The documentary included testimonials from members of the laughter clubs who described how the practice had improved or changed their lives. Its featured segments included a group of workers in an electrical products factory in Mumbai who took time off to laugh during their coffee break.

Feature films

In 1983 with her friend, [Sooni Taraporevala](#), Nair co-wrote *Salaam Bombay!*. Using her documentary film-making and acting experience, Nair sought out real "street children" to more authentically portray the lives of children who survived in the streets and were deprived of a true childhood.^[2] Though the film did not do well at the box office, it won 23 international awards, including the Camera D'or and Prix du Public at the [Cannes Film Festival](#) in 1988. *Salaam Bombay!* was nominated at the [Academy Awards](#) for [Best Foreign Language Film](#) in 1989.

Nair and Taraporevala continued to challenge audiences with the 1991 film *Mississippi Masala*, which told the story of Ugandan-born Indians displaced in [Mississippi](#).^[3] The film, featuring [Denzel Washington](#), [Roshan Seth](#), and [Sarita Choudhury](#), centers on a carpet-cleaner business owner (Washington) who falls in love with the daughter (Choudhury) of one of his Indian clients. The film revealed the evident prejudice in African-American and Indian communities. Like *Salaam Bombay!*, the film was well received by critics, earned a standing ovation at the [Sundance Film Festival](#) in 1992, and won three awards at the [Venice Film Festival](#).

Nair went on to direct four more films before she produced one of her most notable films, *Monsoon Wedding*. Released in 2001, the film told the story of a [Punjabi](#) Indian wedding, written by [Sabrina Dhawan](#). Employing a small crew and casting some of Nair's acquaintances and relatives, the film grossed over \$30 million worldwide. The film was awarded the [Golden Lion](#) award at the [Venice Film Festival](#), making Nair the first female recipient of the award.

Nair then directed the Golden Globe winning *Hysterical Blindness* (2002), followed by making [William Makepeace Thackeray](#)'s epic *Vanity Fair* (2004).

In 2007, Nair was asked to direct *Harry Potter and the Order of the Phoenix*, but turned it down to work on *The Namesake*.^[3] Based on the book by [Pulitzer Prize](#)-winner [Jhumpa Lahiri](#), Sooni Taraporevala's screenplay follows the son of Indian immigrants who wants to fit in with New York City society, but struggles to get away from his family's traditional ways. The film was presented with the Dartmouth Film Award and was also honored with the Pride of India award at the [Bollywood Movie Awards](#). This was followed by the [Amelia Earhart](#) biopic *Amelia* (2009), starring [Hilary Swank](#) and [Richard Gere](#).

In 2012, Nair directed *The Reluctant Fundamentalist*, a thriller based on the best-selling novel by Mohsin Hamid. It opened the 2012 Venice Film Festival to critical acclaim and was released worldwide in early 2013. For the academic reception of Nair's adaptation of *The Reluctant Fundamentalist*, *The Journal of Commonwealth Literature* questions "how the ambivalence and provocativeness of the 'source' text translates into the film adaptation, and the extent to which the film format makes the narrative more palatable and appealing to wider audiences as compared to the novel's target readership.

Nair's 2016 film *Queen of Katwe*, a [Walt Disney Pictures](#) production, starred [Lupita Nyong'o](#) and [David Oyelowo](#) and was based on the story of Ugandan chess prodigy [Phiona Mutesi](#).

Nair's short films include *A Fork, a Spoon and a Knight*, inspired by the [Nelson Mandela](#) quote, "Difficulties break some men but make others." She contributed to *11'09"01 September 11* (2002) in which 11 filmmakers reacted to the events of 11 September 2001. Other titles include *How Can It Be?* (2008), *Migration* (2008), *New York, I Love You* (2009) and her collaboration with, among others, [Emir Kusturica](#) and [Guillermo Arriaga](#) on the compilation feature *Words with Gods*.

Other work

A longtime activist, Nair set up an annual film-makers' laboratory, [Maisha Film Lab](#) in Kampala, Uganda. Since 2005, young directors in East Africa have been trained at this non-profit facility with the belief that "*If we don't tell our stories, no one else will*".^[17] Maisha is currently building a school with Architect Raul Pantaleo, winner of Aga Khan Award for Architecture, and his company Studio Tamassociati.

In 1998, she used the profits from *Salaam Bombay!* to create the [Salaam Baalak Trust](#) which works with street children in India.

A musical adaptation of *Monsoon Wedding*, directed by Nair, premiered at the [Berkeley Repertory Theatre](#), running from 5 May to 16 July 2017.

As of 2015, she lives in New York City, where she is an adjunct professor in the Film Division of the School of Arts for [Columbia University](#). The university has a collaboration with Nair's Maisha Film Lab, and offers opportunities for international students to work together and share their interests in film-making.

In July 2020, journalist [Ellen Barry](#) announced that her [Pulitzer Prize](#)-nominated story "The Jungle Prince of Delhi" about the "[royal family of Oudh](#)", published in [The New York Times](#), would be adapted into a web series for [Amazon Studios](#) by Nair.

In March 2021 it was announced Nair would direct a ten episode TV series for [Disney+](#) reimagining the [National Treasure series](#) with a new cast.

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Best to read the whole article https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Mira_Nair

Patriarchy

makes it sound as if men have all of the power, the financial strength, the freedom to choose.

It is not that simple, at all.....

Some men have a lot of financial strength. Likely though, they have paid a huge social price, to get into that position eg working extremely long hours, or engaged in dangerous and/or illegal activities. Their past may catch up to them?

Poor men may be trapped into social situations, where the choices open to them are very marginalised eg join the military to be able to earn reasonable pay. They may be easily sucked into a war and be unable to escape.

It's a travesty that society lets women be angry while silencing traumatised men

[Melanie Bennet](#)

Nov 18, 2021

https://medium.com/@mel_bennet/its-a-travesty-that-society-lets-women-be-angry-while-silencing-traumatised-men-e4fec9531a62

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As a therapist, one of the things I see most commonly in the men and boys I work with is a feeling that anger and emotion should be avoided at all costs; that it makes them a bad person and needs to be controlled and suppressed. They feel anger is not acceptable, no matter what they have been put through by others. They need to control their emotions.

And it's not just society's internalised misandry making these men feel their anger is abnormal. It's professionals, too. Professionals who instead of seeking to find the cause of their patient's rage, silence it, suppress it, sometimes through words, and other times through a psychiatric diagnosis or an anger management course.

Recently, I worked with a teen boy who had been placed in care after being physically abused, emotionally abused, and sexually abused by his mother. She hated her ex husband and the boy reminded her of him. She took out her frustration on the poor boy. Understandably he was angry, upset, and refused to speak to anyone. He shouted and swore as well as broke things, was truant from school and would even set small fires. Shortly afterwards, he was referred for psychiatric evaluation.

I found this startling. After everything he had been through, isn't his anger totally normal and justified? Why would we suppress such a natural reaction to harm?

We should *all* be spitting with rage.

Believe it or not, this is a real problem in western societies and it is happening right now. Anger is being confused with aggression and violence, despite these feelings being very different. Men are not 'allowed' to show anger, as it is seen as toxic male behaviour and we have historically tended to suggest that traumatised or abused men need to "man up" and toughen up. Sort it out yourself. The reassuring shoulder has been reserved for girls.

For over 100 years, we have attacked men who have wanted to go their way. They have been vilified for not being tough enough, not wanting to marry women, being too assertive, being too interested in themselves — and, of course, the greatest sin of men and boys — not putting the needs of women in front of themselves.

But for me, I let the men let the anger roar. The men I work with scream and swear. I have and will never stop that flow of anger that they have been forced

to bottle up over the years. Whatever past torment is revealed, it is an entirely normal and rational response. And yet even some of the most experienced mental health professionals still do not understand this crucial point.



What we have done whilst trying to build ‘zero tolerance’ to violence environments, is lumped anger in with aggression. In this ‘safe space’ environment, if a teenage boy so much as utters a swear word or says that he ‘hates’ someone, he is perceived as unstable and in need of containing. We have been so obsessed about reducing violence on women, we have turned a blind eye to the violence on men. Violence on men is a convenient joke, reserved for YouTube videos of men getting hit in their testicles.

More of a corrosive issue even than this, is the role gender plays in stereotyping anger in young men. Anger in women and girls is seen as natural, and when they express anger (and aggression), society blindly accepts as normal — But I suppose ‘it’s that time of the month?’... Right? We even have a name for an

obnoxious aggressive woman showing “bad emotions” — The Karen. We don’t have a male equivalent.



And so men are told by the mother from an early age to be nice to girls, polite to girls, respectful to girls, responsible for a girl’s protection, and most of all, not show emotion. Know your place, in other words. Be the provider and protector to women.

I work with therapists, social workers, police officers, psychologists and doctors — who often hold misandrist views about anger in men — their attitude is that women expressing emotion is normal, but men expressing emotion is bad. So it’s time we dismantled the stigma, started listening to men and asked men: “Why are you so angry? Who made you so angry?”

Perhaps if we listened to the words behind the silent screams and understood, we would grab a megaphone and scream from the rooftops too — and that shout could even be loud enough to ignite real change. This International Mens Day, think about all the times you may have tried to control a man by restricting his emotions. Men are not here to be the providers and protectors of women, and to be the strong shoulder for women to cry on while they are hurting inside. Let men express their emotions and think nothing less of them when they do.

The Oppression of Men Affects Us All

When men adhere to gender stereotypes, we all suffer



[Maria Chapman](#)

Mar 4, 2020

<https://medium.com/fearless-she-wrote/the-oppression-of-men-affects-us-all-c96fcd80cd5a>

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Toxic masculinity breeds a culture where [men are suppressing emotions](#) and hiding vulnerability. Suppression renders them unable to develop fulfilling

relationships. Men also experience significant disadvantages due to overgeneralization. Generalizing about the male population leads to mistreatment in court, the workplace, and interacting with children.

The solution is to redefine gender roles throughout society and begin focusing on what makes a strong, kind person, not a man or woman.

Despite legislation changes, the family court remains a challenge for fathers

During our family's struggle with [parental alienation](#) and the family court system, my husband had to constantly prove his status as a primary parent. In recent years, [legislation regarding divorce law](#) and custody arrangements has shifted to [recommend custody](#) be shared equally in most circumstances. The experience of [custodial fathers](#) in the court system isn't reflective of this just yet.

My husband was a custodial father of his three children for seven years before I met him. Their mother had visitation every other weekend but rarely took the children. However, when she initiated a bid for full custody nine years after their initial divorce, every court official assumed she had always been the primary parent.

Rather than referring to the court documents, or giving my husband the benefit of the doubt, court officials made him prove his parenting status. He had to prove to mediators, lawyers, judges, and even the Department of Children and Families that he had been the person providing 100% of the children's physical and emotional support for a decade.

Men experience adverse reactions in the workplace for anti-masculine behavior

While employers often expect that women with families will have their work negatively impacted by the demands of children, the opposite is true for men. [Employers often expect that men will be without the requirements](#) of sick days and children's school events. In reality, many fathers are doing the work of parenting on their own. Even those with a partner are as likely as their female counterparts to desire time with children.

Men who stay home when their children are sick or take time off to attend sporting events or concerts suffer penalties in the employment sector, especially in competitive fields. While it's true that women have been battling this for a long time, it isn't fair to assume they are the only ones feeling the ill-effects of society's insistence on an unhealthy work-life balance.

My husband experienced this in his first professional role working in an accounting firm that expected him to work seven days a week during tax season. He had three children at home who were utterly dependent on him, so he refused to work on Sundays unless his employer required it in his contract.

Men are suspect without reason

At the local trampoline park last weekend, there was a small child stuck in the ball pit having trouble getting her limbs to cooperate. Without thinking twice, I reached out and gave her a hand.

My husband would [never be able](#) to do that at a playground. [Society has a general distrust for men](#) around children that makes it difficult for fathers to lead sleepovers, and for male teachers to hug a needy student.

The solution may be obvious but needs a broader application to be effective. We need to change the definition of masculine and the list of traits identified as masculine.

The idea that boys are supposed to be unfeeling, violence-addicted robots and girls are supposed to be emotionally-led loose cannons is false.

But that's precisely the message children receive at school and in our homes. It carries through to adulthood and leads men to develop psychological and physical health issues that stem from an internal war between their innate personalities and what society tells them they need to be.

Every child, regardless of gender, falls somewhere on a spectrum for each of the [nine traits of temperament](#). Boys can have high or low activity levels, and girls can have high or low levels of sensitivity. Boys and girls can both have issues with distractibility, and both can be persistent and adaptable.

Characterizing all boys as over-active and all girls as emotional is a gross misuse of categorization.

These personality traits remain relatively constant as we grow into adults. Unfortunately, negative messages about those personality traits are carried to adulthood as well. The [APA provides resources](#) for parents and caregivers to employ strategies that will raise children in a safe and accepting environment.

If we wish for young women and young men to get the message that they are just fine the way they are, we need to treat them, and the adults of their gender, that way.

In our home, we mix up gender roles.

My husband does most of the dishes while singing show tunes, and I do my fair share of gardening. I'm still working on ensuring my children know that their father is as capable of cooking and childcare as I am. I tend to take over and try to do everything myself. Luckily, my husband keeps reminding me when I falter.

My children have seen their father cry, both in sadness and joy, and they know that I'm the more professionally driven of us. There aren't personality traits that are masculine or feminine in our home. We work diligently to ensure that our children are comfortable being themselves and that they know there is no right or wrong way to be a man or woman.

The rest of the world hasn't caught up.

The men at my husband's weekly poker games sit and ridicule each other for hours on end. The words "sissy" and "pansy-ass" are thrown around as often as a two of diamonds. This male-male verbal assault existed in abundance during his stint in the Air Force as well.

The boys at my son's school tell each other they "cry like a girl" or tease each other for showing affection to their parents. They encourage each other to play

video games featuring superheroes and fighting. Just this year, in fourth grade, my son was teased for singing as he hung up his coat in the classroom.

Redefining masculinity, and femininity

Our new definition of what constitutes a strong man should mirror how we define strong women. Healthy people know who they are and maintain their unique personalities regardless of social pressures. They are goal-oriented and relentless in their pursuits. Strong people use reason to process emotions before responding. People of character are kind to others and respond with empathy to those in need. Strong people build relationships with substance and secure emotional connections.

Thankfully, my boy still retains much of the empathy that makes him unique and isn't afraid to hold my hand or kiss me in front of his friends, but I know that day is coming unless society does an about-face in the coming years. It's my job as his mother to work hard to let him know that even though he possesses traits not considered traditionally masculine, his personality is perfect for what he's supposed to do in life.

There is common ground if we look for it. Society's oppression of men is often referred to as toxic masculinity, but then, the focus is typically on how such behavior affects women. Let's shift that focus and look at how it affects all people.

Our goal is a society of strong and capable people, regardless of gender.

Don't misinterpret this and think that the rights of women are any less important to me. Supporting equal treatment for one group does not take anything away from the other. Just like acknowledging the validity of Black Lives Matter doesn't cost white people anything, admitting that men receive faulty messages about gender roles doesn't detract from the importance of women's rights.

Society oppresses men and women in different ways. I'm not trying to undermine the oppression women experience; instead, I encourage members on both sides of the divide to educate themselves about the experiences of the other group. Diving into the worldview of those who hold opposing views may help you find some common ground. Once we share the same base of knowledge, we can move forward, even if we disagree.

The Surprising Ways Men Are Oppressed

Men benefit from a certain amount of power based solely on gender, but that isn't the whole story



[Maria Chapman](#)

Mar 2, 2020

<https://medium.com/fearless-she-wrote/the-surprising-ways-men-are-oppressed-3036bd60d22c>

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Photo by Maria Chapman

A [reader recently commented on a piece](#) in which I challenge women to choose the words they use with younger generations with care. This reader asked why I was only focusing on the effect such things have on women and not on men. He pointed out that men also experience oppression in our world.

When I receive a comment from a reader, I try to consider their worldview before replying. [Worldview influences](#) what we find important, the way we talk, and how we behave. Having a debate with someone without trying to understand where they come from is shooting in the dark.

My initial reaction was that men hadn't been oppressed in the same ways or to the same degree as women, and I still maintain that view. However, I just read [The Gap](#) by Douglas Vigliotti, who encourages readers to explore the viewpoints of others and close their knowledge gaps to grow as human beings in a connected society. I'm a fan of the book, and of the idea that educating ourselves is the key to a culture that is collaborative rather than mutually destructive.

What I learned was interesting, though, unfortunately, not surprising, especially when I considered the experiences of my husband and sons.

Society oppresses men

[The American Psychological Association](#) defines oppression as:

discrimination against and/or systematic denial of resources to members of groups who are identified as inferior or less deserving than others. Oppression is most frequently experienced by individuals with

marginalized social identities; is manifested in both blatant and subtle discrimination in areas such as racism, ageism, sexism, classism, and heterosexism; and results in limited access to social power (Robinson, 2012; Worell & Remer, 2003).

Men benefit from a certain amount of power based solely on gender, but that isn't the whole story. Not all men enjoy the power attributed to their gender. For those that do enjoy the higher social status of masculinity, there is often a tradeoff in the form of mental health and healthy interpersonal relationships.

[The APA alerts practitioners](#) that men are quite likely to suffer from a wide range of psychological and physical health issues for which they don't seek the appropriate help due to social conditioning.

The emotions and biological urges that toxic masculinity requires men to suppress [can cause depression and anxiety](#). Often, aggression or other external manifestations disguise the symptoms, and a reluctance to be vulnerable keeps them hidden. When men are pushed far enough and become suicidal, they are successful more often than women.

Without the barriers that society puts on men and women, there aren't apparent differences in how they approach life. Men can nurture their children as well as women, and women can demonstrate violent tendencies, the direction they fall depends on the conditioning they encounter.

Men learn from a young age that to be manly, they must be without emotional needs. Boys experience ridicule for showing weakness and celebrated for demonstrating traditionally masculine traits. Often, cultural norms come into play and magnify the requirement for male behavior.

Men, then, are oppressed because they are often unable to demonstrate the behaviors that are both essential pieces of human nature, and considered traditionally feminine. If they don't adhere to stereotypes, they are mistreated.

While it is true that women have been handed a raw deal in the gender role stereotypes, **it's essential to realize that men haven't escaped unscathed.**

Society celebrates adherence to gender stereotypes. A boy who wins a fight is called a champion. In school, a young boy is a problem child when he can't sit still, and yelling becomes background noise due to the frequency. [He doesn't cry when he's corrected.](#) Instead, he talks back because men are tough, and crying is for sissy-boys.

Then, as an adult, the same boy is incarcerated for the behavior that was celebrated by parents, peers, and society in his formative years.

The APA cautions practitioners that multiple layers of oppression compound this problem if the young man is anything other than white.

Psychological and physical illness resulting from exposure to toxic gender bias is worse for men and boys who don't fit well into masculine stereotypes. Young boys who cry easily, or display unusually feminine traits often grow into men who develop what the [APA refers to as Gender Role Conflict \(GRC\)](#). These men have forced themselves to comply with masculine stereotypes to fit in.

Men with GRC are conflicted about emotional attachment, need for personal and professional achievement, and balancing work and family life. This internal

battle becomes a litany of physical and mental symptoms that hold them back from leading a full life.

Despite this evidence of the ill effects of toxic masculinity on all members of our society, current theories and policies surrounding violent and aggressive behavior ignore socialization as a contributor. The APA recommends that social reform policies include teaching men about the ill effects of toxic masculinity through counseling and group education sessions.

Men who recognize their privilege and shed some of the gender role stereotypes are more likely to build meaningful adult relationships based on affection rather than control. That should be our goal for all people, regardless of gender.

Men are part of the problem

In [*Oppressed and Oppressors? The Systematic Mistreatment of Men*](#), sociologist Caroline New agrees that forcing men to adhere to prescribed masculine traits is a form of oppression. She argues that men are unable to have their emotional needs met within the confines of male behavior expected by society.

I find it interesting that in this way, men are both the oppressed and contributing to the societal oppression of their gender. Men who stand at the sidelines and ridicule boys for missing a goal, or tell their young sons not to cry over a broken toy are the oppressed and the oppressor. They don't have their emotional needs met, so they are unable to form strong social ties to others, including their children. They are also contributing to the suppression of emotions in the next generation of men.

[Humans desire connection, physical affection, and deep, loving relationships.](#)

Most human behavior is dictated by this need, regardless of gender. I'm willing to bet, however, that the macho man yelling at his kid for missing a shot on the court isn't telling his wife at the end of a hard day that he needs some gentle touch and a safe place to talk about his feelings. Men are walking around without an emotional outlet, and that weighs on them. No wonder addictions and self-destructive behavior are so prevalent.

Women are also part of the problem

When my daughter was born, I, like so many mothers, tried to do 100% of the baby-care. The result was that my daughter relied on me, and once she could talk and walk, she'd bypass her father to interrupt my shower and ask for a snack. I'm not unique in this experience. Women, it's partly our fault.

Men are just as capable as women of providing emotional support, but we have to give them the opportunity.

[We make it apparent, based on our behavior towards our husbands,](#) that they are less capable of childcare, less nurturing. Our children pick up on those signals, and our boys grow up believing that they aren't responsible for childcare, and our girls don't expect their male partners to share the load.

Men are just as capable as women of providing emotional support, but we have to give them the opportunity. We also need to be available when the men and boys in our lives need emotional support. We can't brush it off because they are male.

Luckily, I'm married to a man who is willing to call me on my bad behavior as many times as it takes for me to get the message. Imagine my delight when at 4:00 AM during an ear infection fueled sleepless night, my daughter looked at me and said, "I want my daddy snuggles!"

Schools are also part of the problem

As I read an account of male oppression by [Julianna Simon and Marianne Preger-Simon](#), I found myself thinking of my son and the journey through his first nine years of life.

Preger-Simon and Simon ascertain that men are taught by society to repress emotion, ignore empathy, and not show a desire for connection or affection. We've seen this play out in pop culture where men are macho and unfeeling in movies and television shows. But, I've heard about it around my kitchen table.

My son is an empath with a strong need for affection. At four years old, he desperately wanted a younger sibling for Christmas, but Santa brought him dolls instead. He wasn't disappointed. Those babies became his.

When he marched into Kindergarten the following October, baby dolls in his backpack for show and tell, his classmates ridiculed him. The other boys in class called him girly and made fun of him for playing with dolls. This happened four years ago, and he remembers it like it was yesterday.

His first run-in with toxic masculinity has colored his life ever since.

My son's female teacher informed me the other day that my boy cries too easily when upset and that we should teach him to hold his emotions in. I remember my stepson's teachers saying something similar about him. Would they say this about a nine-year-old girl? No, my son's best friend is a young girl who wears cat ears every day and also cries easily. It's accepted because she's a girl — she's supposed to be emotional.

Teachers tend to spend more time supporting the [academic achievements of girls](#). Boys, therefore, are less likely to get the necessary academic support to reach their potential. Boys are also significantly more likely to receive [correction for their misbehavior](#) than girls.

As it turns out, [teachers are far more likely to correct male misbehavior aloud](#), in front of a large group. Girls tend to receive corrective feedback privately. The problem here is that many boys are sensitive to this sort of feedback, and feel a deep sense of shame and embarrassment that causes them to shut down intellectually and emotionally.

[Historically, boys lag behind girls in educational achievement](#). Girls are catching up in science and mathematics, two areas where female students had traditionally lagged. Boys, however, are falling further behind in literacy. Boys worry about how their peers perceive them. Since effort in education is considered a feminine trait, they are less likely than their female counterparts to put in the necessary effort to boost achievement.

I won't try to persuade you that men have it worse than women, or that the experiences are equal in any way. The societal conditioning of men and women and the resulting implications for physical and mental health are different.

Acknowledging the hardships of one group of people doesn't cheapen the experiences of other groups.

Men must be allowed to express emotions, display vulnerability, and build healthy relationships for the benefit of us all.

Ukraine war Russian soldier Vadim Shishimarin jailed for life over war crime

By Patrick Jackson & James Waterhouse

in London and Kyiv

<https://www.bbc.com/news/world-europe-61549569>

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IMAGE SOURCE, REUTERS

Image caption,

Vadim Shishimari, 21, watched proceedings silently from a reinforced glass box in the Kyiv courtroom

A court in Ukraine has jailed a Russian tank commander for life for killing a civilian at the first war crimes trial since the invasion.

Captured soldier Sgt Vadim Shishimarin was convicted of killing Oleksandr Shelipov, 62, in the north-eastern village of Chupakhivka on 28 February.

He admitted shooting Mr Shelipov but said he had been acting on orders and asked forgiveness of the man's widow.

Many other alleged war crimes are being investigated by Ukraine.

And in a conflict where the deliberate targeting of civilians has become one of the defining features, Monday's outcome sets a significant legal precedent.

Moscow has always denied its troops have targeted civilians, despite a wealth of evidence to the contrary, while Ukraine says more than 11,000 crimes may have occurred.

Ukraine, however, is likely to bring more cases like this to unpick Moscow's blanket denials.

This sentencing is unlikely to lead to an immediate change in tactics from the invading forces, but it does bring Oleksandr Shelipov's widow Kateryna Shelipova justice.

- **Ukraine war: Live updates**
- **What is a war crime?**
- **Could Putin be prosecuted?**

Imposing the life sentence, Judge Serhiy Agafonov said Shishimarin, 21, had carried out a "criminal order" by a soldier of higher rank.

"Given that the crime committed is a crime against peace, security, humanity and the international legal order... the court does not see the possibility of imposing a [shorter] sentence of imprisonment," he said.

Shishimarin, wearing a blue and grey hooded sweatshirt, watched proceedings silently from a reinforced glass box in the courtroom and showed no emotion as the verdict was read out.

His lawyer said an appeal would be lodged against the verdict.

The Kremlin's response is already in motion, with laws being drafted and courts being set up in Russia to try some Ukrainian prisoners as war criminals.

This suggests both countries could soon find themselves in a legal tit-for-tat while the conflict rages on.



IMAGE **SOURCE,EPA**

Image caption,

'What did my husband do to you?' widow Kateryna Shelipova asked the Russian soldier during the trial

Shishimarin served in Russia's Kantemirovskaya tank division. At the time of the killing, he and other soldiers were travelling in a car they had seized after their convoy came under attack and they became separated from their unit.

When they spotted Mr Shelipov he was speaking on his phone, Shishimarin told the court. He said he was told to shoot him with an assault rifle.

His defence lawyer told the court on Friday that Shishimarin had only fired after twice refusing to carry out the order to shoot and that only one out of three to four rounds had hit the man.

He said Shishimarin fired the rounds out of fear for his own safety and he questioned whether the defendant had intended to kill.

In one dramatic moment, the victim's widow Kateryna Shelipova confronted Shishimarin. "Tell me please, why did you [Russians] come here? To protect us?" she asked, citing Russian President Vladimir Putin's justification for the invasion of Ukraine.

"Protect us from whom? Did you protect me from my husband, whom you killed?"

The soldier had no answer to that. Asking forgiveness of the widow earlier, he said: "But I understand you won't be able to forgive me."

Ms Shelipova told the BBC: "I feel very sorry for him but for a crime like that - I can't forgive him."

- **Collecting the dead in Bucha**
- **Gruesome evidence points to war crimes on road to Kyiv**
- **Could Putin be prosecuted for war crimes?**

Since President Putin sent Russian troops into Ukraine on 24 February, at least 3,838 civilians have been killed and 4,351 injured, according to the UN.

Among the dead are numerous suspected victims of war crimes in occupied towns such as Bucha. Earlier this month, the BBC obtained CCTV footage of the killing of two civilians in cold blood allegedly by Russian soldiers, a case now being investigated by prosecutors as a suspected war crime.

Media caption,

Watch: Russian soldiers caught on camera killing unarmed civilians

BBC Panorama investigates alleged war crimes in Ukraine in Hunting Putin's War Criminals, which airs on Monday 23 May at 20:30 in the UK.

You can watch the programme after it airs here.

Russia Offers Freedom to Convicts to Fight in Ukraine



[Wes O'Donnell](#)

Aug 11

<https://wesodonnell.medium.com/russia-offers-freedom-to-murderers-and-convicts-to-fight-in-ukraine-9f4f0bbdc55a>

4 min read

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A [month-long investigation by CNN](#) has revealed that Russian authorities are offering convicts freedom after six months, a monthly salary of 200,000 rubles, and compensation to families of up to five million rubles (\$82,000) if the convict dies in combat.

“Join the Army or go to jail.”

Harkening back to a dark time in U.S. history, some judges from the Vietnam-era and before often issued this ultimatum to men convicted of moderately severe offenses.

There’s even a [case of it happening fairly recently](#) in the U.S., although it was *the criminal* who requested to join the infantry in lieu of a 12-month prison sentence for sexual assault.

Shockingly, the judge agreed!

With the exception of this recent case, the U.S. military today is an organization that places a premium on the intelligence, capability, and integrity of the men and women who volunteer to serve in uniform.

To put it another way, if you’re in a combat environment, would you trust the man or woman next to you if they were there against their will?

This revelation speaks to the quality, or lack thereof, of Russian troops currently galivanting their way around eastern and southern Ukraine.

CNN was able to interview one Russian prisoner, using a contraband cell phone smuggled into the prison, who outlined the conditions of the offer:

“They will accept murderers, but not rapists, pedophiles, extremists, or terrorists. Amnesty or a pardon in six months is on offer. Somebody talks about 100,000 rubles a month, another 200,000. Everything is different.”

The Russian prisoner went on to say that the offer was made when unidentified men came to the prison in the first half of July, and that acceptance into the program would lead to two weeks of training in the Rostov region in southern Russia.

While this particular prisoner had two years' service in the military, he said the recruiters did not seem to insist on military experience.

The Russian military has a ban on employing convicts. This means that these convicts are likely being recruited by the Wagner private military contractor, with the blessing of Putin himself.

Out of 400 applications from prisoners at this particular prison, 50 had been accepted and placed into quarantine within the prison.

Russia's military manning woes come as Putin's "special military operation" closes in on its sixth month.

Because Putin has not officially declared war on Ukraine, he is unable to use widespread mobilization laws and conscription which could allow him to flood Ukraine with hundreds of thousands of troops.

Instead, Putin is using a mechanized force and artillery to achieve his military objectives.

But despite the world's technological advances, it's still the infantry who win decisive victory in wars.

Putin is learning this lesson the hard way.

Families of Russian convicts are worried

This program first came to light when family members of injured convicts in the Russian-backed separatist area of Luhansk began receiving chat messages from their inmates on the frontline.

[According to messages seen by CNN](#), the desperation of the prisoners is notable:

PRISONER

I am going. But don't tell mother either way. It's better that way. Or else she'll worry a lot and react to every piece of news.

BROTHER

That's it, we will react to every news. If you tell us where you are, what you're doing, we will be calmer as at least we will know where to look.

PRISONER

I am willing to go. Lots of options [in life], but now there is only one. That's why I agreed.

BROTHER

You could work at the prison, read books, get qualifications in IT or languages.

PRISONER

I am already too old for that sh*t.

Ultimately, Putin may fear full mobilization from the general population because once casualties start returning to Russia, he may lose popular support for his invasion.

The latest Western assessments suggest up to 75,000 Russian troops have been killed or injured since Putin's folly started.

If nothing else, this news gives us a brief glimpse into the desperation that Russian military leaders must be feeling about their manning shortfalls.

As the Ukrainians continue to put more Russians on ice, there will come a breaking point where Putin must either declare an actual war or pull out of Ukraine altogether.

My money is on Putin eventually pulling Russian troops from Ukrainian territory. Although, I've been wrong before — many times — and was one of the people who thought Putin would never be so foolish to invade in the first place.

At least now, Ukrainian fighters can gain some small measure of comfort knowing that the men they are currently fighting in the east and south are not exactly the crème de la crème of Russian fighting men.

3 Lies You Were Told as a Boy That are Now Crushing You as a Man

Ever since you were a kid, you've been lied to. By your parents. By your teachers. By the media.

August 2, 2017 by [Phil Drolet](#) 26 Comments

<https://goodmenproject.com/social-justice-2/3-lies-you-were-told-as-a-boy-that-are-now-crushing-you-as-a-man-wcz/>



By your parents. By your teachers. By the media.

Like “bad lines of code” inputted into your brain, these destructive lies now shape your reality.

They make you feel immense pressure to perform.

They make it hard to be vulnerable with others.

They make you feel stressed out and anxious.

Thankfully, that can be changed.

Over the past 2 years, I’ve gone on a powerful journey to study with spiritual teachers around the world (shamans in Peru, healers in California, tantra masters in Bali, etc), and I’ve been able to rewrite these lines of code in my own consciousness.

The results have been staggering, and I’m now on a quest to share what I’ve learned with other men.

In this article, I’m going to tell you what these 3 lies are, and you can (finally) free yourself from them and start experiencing effortless confidence and more meaningful success.



#1 The Lie: “Showing Weakness is Bad”

From an early age, most boys’ biggest fear is being perceived as weak.

Who wants to be made fun of for crying at recess?

Who wants to be called a sissy (or something worse)?

No one, of course.

So we learned to be overly stoic.

Never show weakness.

Don’t cry. Don’t complain.

Be tough. Man up.

As we get older, this attitude stifles our potential and makes it much harder to handle life’s difficulties.

Why?

Because while developing grit is essential, not expressing vulnerability or asking for help is devastating.

It makes us feel alone.

Isolated. Trapped.

It prevents us from connecting deeply with others, and stops us from asking for support when we need it most.

The Solution

To overcome this, you need to delete the old line of code that says “*Don’t show weakness, just be tough*”...

...and replace it by a new one:

“Showing weakness is a sign of strength.”

Now, let’s make something clear: I’m not suggesting you go around whining and bitching about everything. No way.

I grew up in Canada as a high-level swimmer (and I’ve braved many early mornings, freezing winters and excruciating workouts). I take pride in being gritty and having uncommon toughness when I need it.

But I've also learned that this doesn't mean I need to keep a "brave face" all the time.

Here's the deal: when you are faced with an obstacle, give it your best shot... and if it's not working, or you're struggling, don't hesitate to ask for support from someone you trust.

It will make your life a heck of a lot simpler, and it will show the world that you're comfortable enough with who you are to ask for help (instead of pretending you've got it all figured out...).

Here's something to remember: no one has it all figured out.

I recently spoke with Tim Ferriss, and he mentioned that learning to ask for help was the most life-changing upgrade he'd made in the last year.

Are you ready to do the same?

#2 The Lie: "You Need to Perform to Be Loved"

This lie is huge, and overcoming it has been major part of my own journey.

Early on, we're taught that our value as a man is based on 3 things:

Our athletic performance: Star athletes are generally the most popular kids in school. Why? Because Western society values this above all else. If you sucked at sports, you were fighting an uphill battle. If you were good at them, you were put on a pedestal.

Our financial success: We're brought up to admire top athletes, celebrities, CEO's and other wealthy men. We equate having lots of money with success (no matter what it takes to get it).

Our sexual conquests: We're taught that being popular with girls makes us "the man". Losing our virginity is a huge deal (remember *American Pie*?) and taking a girl home is the signpost of a successful night for many.

Because we've been taught this is so important, we feel enormous pressure to succeed, whether it's through training obsessively, taking a soul-sucking job because it pays well, or sleeping with a random girl to feel validated and to have a good story for our buddies.

Society's game is set up in such a way that it's very easy to sacrifice our integrity and wellbeing in the name of achievement and approval.

How could we not? We've been conditioned from the start to believe that who we are isn't enough unless we perform spectacularly.

That's a big burden to carry every day, isn't it?

The Solution

The solution is simple yet challenging: we need to fall in love with who we are.

Our flaws, our brilliance, our quirkiness, our insecurities, our psychotic thoughts. The whole spectrum.

We need not only to be OK with them but actually appreciate them.

We need to replace the line of code that says: *“I won’t be loved unless I’m constantly performing at a high-level”*...

... by this one:

“I’m amazing just as I am. I don’t need to prove my worth. I am loved just for being myself.”

This is mission-critical. The moment you change this line of code, everything will get better in your life.

Interestingly enough, several men are afraid that by taking on this new line of code, they’ll get lazy, stop working hard and start failing in their job.

In my personal experience (and from guiding several high-level clients through this process), I’ve found that it’s actually the opposite: you’ll feel more relaxed and have deeper confidence in yourself, which will allow you to achieve more...*with a fraction of the effort.*

#3 The Lie: “Feminine Qualities are Bad”

As boys, we all wanted to avoid being called “a girl” by our friends.

While this might seem like an innocent schoolyard phenomenon, it created a BIG PROBLEM in our psyche (and society):

Most men now stay away from anything resembling feminine behavior: expressing their feelings, crying, letting go of control, etc.

I remember vividly wanting to cry when I was upset as boy but feeling like it was wrong. Like it would get me in trouble. Like people would laugh at me.

The issue is, developing feminine qualities such as compassion, kindness and tenderness is necessary to being a good man.

Even crying is important. It’s a natural response to strong emotions and without it, our feelings get bottled up inside and we end up feeling tremendous tension.

In the Taoist tradition, the core teaching is that the key to our full potential is to balance our Yin (Feminine) and Yang (Masculine) energies.

When we're out of balance, for example by focusing too much on masculine qualities (ie, hard work, strength, achievement) we get stressed out and exhausted.

Why? Because masculine qualities are generally connected with the mind while feminine qualities are connected with the heart.

We become robotic, we lose perspective, and deluded in our thinking.

We overthink things. We stress the small stuff. We focus on the wrong things.

(It even leads some entrepreneurs to destroy themselves...)

We forget the Universe has our back.

We forget to be kind to others.

We forget that life's supposed to be fun.

The Solution

For the last 2 years of my life, I've been actively developing my Yin side (growing up as an elite athlete, I've always had plenty of Yang), and it has made my life a lot enjoyable while also making me a better entrepreneur, athlete and boyfriend.

Here's what I learned:

Remember that you're a part of something much bigger than yourself.

You're on Earth with 7 billions of your brothers and sisters.

We're all on the same team.

You're a part of a gigantic, magnificent Universe.

You're connected with all of it.

You need to remove the line of code that says:

"If it's up to be, it's up to me. I need to make it happen" by this one:

"In every moment, I'm co-creating with the Universe and I'm always supported."

Take a moment to feel it.

You're not just a human floating on a rock in space.

You're a divine bad-ass incarnated to play the game of.

You're here to live your dreams, be kind to others, and have a blast every day.

Why not make the most of it?

Much love,
Phil

High risk, well paid work Isn't Gendered, But Men Still Do The Bulk Of It

[Melanie Bennet](#)

Jan 11

https://medium.com/@mel_bennet/high-risk-well-paid-work-isnt-gendered-but-men-still-do-the-bulk-of-it-5ed708f9b2cf

5 min read

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Should there even be such a thing as men's work? Feminism 101 says that there is no such thing as "men's work" or "women's work", and if anyone says there is, then it's all just part of the patriarchy to oppress women. I'm not going to discuss that today, that'll be another discussion. Feminists who call for quotas in areas of "non-traditional" female employment do so typically in "safe" industries, but the silence from feminists is deafening when those same standards for quotas are applied for "traditional female employment" areas.

One safe work area is that of government. I'm in Australia, and 65% of government employees are women. The government is a safe employer. Women dominated all government departments, with some departments over 85% women. The only departments where men outnumber women was in the Police and in Prisons. Surely feminists should be calling for gender equity in prisons. Why should it be that its only male warders who get shivved? Why is it OK that *Child Safety* has 90% female employees?

Feminism is obsessed with the "pay gap" and "chore gap", and this is painted as the evil patriarchy oppressing women. Evil male employers pay women less than men, for the same job because men favour men, and lazy men don't do anything at home because women are doing all the washing, ironing, cleaning etc.

The question to ask is: Shouldn't everyone be pulling their weight equally to keep a household in order?

The obvious answer is yes, but feminists *only* apply this to the household chores, not to the *income producing chores* of a household, like paid work....

Let's look at the statistics. I will use some taken from a story from an "outraged feminist". She has stated that:

In the US, women still do the bulk of the housework, even in two-person, two-income households. The Bureau of Labor Statistics Time Use Survey found that this divide starts young. Women aged 15 and older spend 5.7 hours a day on housework and caretaking, while men did 3.6 hours of work

Essentially the outrage is that women spend an extra 2.1 hours per day on housework, or home chores, than men. It's a statistic that I am not going to challenge, and I think it's probably true. I'm in Australia, so I'll assume the "chore gap" is 2.1 hours per day here too. Does it really matter? She says it does and those extra 2 hours could be used by women to get educated etc

I went to the ABS (Australian Bureau of Statistics) to find the average hours worked per gender. The 2016 Census summarised it succinctly. Essentially, women work an average of 28 hours per week and men 36 hours per week, essentially men slave away at a workplace an extra 1.6 hours a day. Allowing for an average commute of 20 mins each way, and over the week, I think you'll find the *chore gap time* is pretty much cancelled out by the extra hours worked by men and the extra travel time to work they have to provide income for the family.

While feminists love to portray men as lazy so and sos around home, maybe the *chore gap time* is pretty much zero if you use the equation:

Household Contribution = Chore time + work time + travel to work time. (as well as income balance too)

The amount of time spent per area doesn't have to match each others, but I would suggest that inequality only occurs when *Household contribution* is not equal.

A marriage, or couples arrangement, is a partnership. Each person brings something unique and they should compliment the other. Feminists love to paint women as victims. This is dangerous. I would suggest that the perceived *chore gap* is another faux issue.

However, the more serious issue is that of the dangerous work gap. Let's face it, remuneration is generally higher, the more complex the job, or the more dangerous the job. Underground miners are paid more than above ground miners, and remote workers command more money than those working in a safer environment. For example, an electrician working in a domestic setting will be paid much less per hour than the same electrician working on an oil rig. The oil rig work is away from loved ones, remote and has a much higher risk. Salaries are reflected by supply and demand. In order to get people to work the more dangerous, unpleasant jobs, a higher salary is offered.

An electrician working on an oil rig is going to earn a lot more money than a hairdresser or inner city barista. This is why the gender pay gap exists. Men are more likely to chase the high risk, higher paying jobs than women. The *gender pay gap* exists not because women are oppressed by men in business,

the *gender pay gap* exists because men are in those more dangerous, high risk, yet higher paying jobs.

Men are more likely to be employed in the private sector. Women prefer the safety of the public sector where pay outcomes are set by bands and classifications. The private sector pay outcomes reflect risk, supply and demand.

There are also unintended consequences with workplace deaths and serious injuries being male dominated (high 90%).

The *gender pay gap* has unintended consequences. A New Zealand study looked at the tax paid per gender per age band. it then looked at that as a cumulative effect.

Women pay less income tax than men.

Over her lifetime, each New Zealand woman receives \$125,000 more in government spending than she pays in income tax, and the average man is zero. For the purposes of equality, this gap needs to be reduced. The government is not a sugar daddy.

There will always be a wages gap between hairdressers, shop assistants, nurses, teachers, child care workers, and others such as miners, engineers, tradespeople. It is supply and demand, risk and reward. But, those high risk jobs will always pay more, no matter how much more you pay the lowest paid. Chore Gap, Wages Gap. It's all a smokescreen. No-one talks about the spending gap. Feminists should be embarrassed that the employees in these dangerous,

high risk, well paid jobs are mainly men, typically supporting women back home keeping the house clean.

How Military Recruitment Targets Low-Income Schools, And Why That's A Problem

TOPICS: Hayley Serpa JROTC Military Public Schools



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Online

POSTED BY: FIUSM CONTRIBUTING WRITERS JULY 27, 2020

Hayley Serpa/Contributing Writer

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If you've ever attended a public high school in South Florida, you are no stranger to the presence of military recruiters on campus. They set up booths in well-trafficked areas and charmingly chat with the students walking by. Their spotless, shining shoes and freshly clipped haircuts let you know that they are all business.

Yet, the presence of military recruiters seems to be solely confined to lower-income schools.

Having attended both a private and public high school in Miami, I can tell you from firsthand experience that not once did military recruiters appear at my private school. There wasn't even a JROTC (Junior Reserve Officers' Training Corps) program. When I transferred to a Title I public school, I was utterly shocked at the teenagers waking up before sunset to participate in JROTC.

What could possibly make these kids want to participate in this program, I wondered at the time. When I asked some JROTC members, they all had strikingly similar responses: they had joined JROTC for the scholarship opportunities that would be available to them after graduation.

But, there was a condition for receiving the full-ride scholarship. The student had to join the military, and after receiving their bachelor's, they would be assigned a higher-ranking position in their chosen branch.

For most students, the military is a pathway out of poverty. They don't have the means from which to pay for their education, so they enlist. The military covers everything, from housing and tuition, to food. The Pentagon knows this and they use it to their advantage, actively targeting students from lower-income communities.

A [study](#) was conducted during the 2011-2012 school year to record the number of times army recruiters visited two high schools in Connecticut; one being higher-income, and one being low-income. Army recruiters visited the higher-income school just four times. Meanwhile, those same recruiters visited the low-income school over 40 times. Both schools were in the same district, the only difference between them being the median wealth of the students' families.

Miami is no exception. [Around 40 to 65 percent](#) of the country's JROTC programs are currently found in the southeastern United States. This is no mistake, as the southeast has a higher minority population than up north. The military not only offers to fully pay for your education, but to also fast-track your citizenship status. For immigrants, (many of which are concentrated in Miami), this is no doubt an appealing prospect. One would almost say that it is impossible to say no to.

To the military, there are no individuals. There are only faceless names on a sheet of paper.

This is not to say that I am anti-military recruitment. Military careers support thousands of families in the U.S. and that is indispensable. However, they are disproportionately recruiting at low-income schools because they know that higher-income students don't need the financial security that joining the military offers. These are young teenagers who feel forced to join so that they can live a better life and help their families.

Instead of forcing students to rely on the military for a higher quality of life, state governments should begin by reallocating funds towards improving educational resources in lower-income communities. New books, better technology and higher quality teachers are just some ways in which these funds can improve the life and education of these teenagers. This investment will encourage interest in following their own personal goals and becoming their own individuals.

To the military, there are no individuals. There are only faceless names on a sheet of paper.

Featured image by [Arctic Warrior](#) on Flickr.

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US Military Recruitment and the Weaponization of Poverty

Social Secretary Ella Kipling discusses how through access to high school students, Military Recruiters target vulnerable low-income students with recruitment tactics.



Ella Kipling

Published at 13:00 on 16 September 2021

<https://www.redbrick.me/us-military-recruitment-and-the-weaponization-of-poverty/>

Images by Diego González

The US Military's recruitment tactics have been an increasingly controversial topic of conversation over the years, with many people feeling that they target low-income and vulnerable high school students. As someone from the UK, I find it strange to imagine what it would be like to constantly see recruiters in the school hallway or the cafeteria, but that is a common reality for many students across the United States.

In 2002, President George Bush signed the 'No Child Left Behind Act,' a piece of legislation that required military recruiters to be granted the same access to high school students as college recruiters. Since the military draft ended in 1973, the US military has relied on an all-volunteer service, which has led to the targeting of high school students during the recruitment process. The presence of military recruiters in American high schools is not an uncommon sight, and over the years recruiters have been accused of targeting low-income areas with recruitment tactics.

Jenny, a junior at Santa Maria High School, said that she 'began to notice a strong military presence' at her school. She said: 'I expressed my concerns but I felt uncomfortable as my principal, an ex-military man, put me on the spot with questions about why I felt the way I did about military presence at our school. As if it was totally normal to have recruiters and presenters in our classrooms multiple times each week.' Reporters in Connecticut found that recruiters made 10 times as many visits to one low-income school as they did to a nearby affluent school. For young people in low-income neighbourhoods, joining the military is often presented as a chance to escape poverty and grant them access to a higher education they may not otherwise be able to afford.

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Joining the military is often presented as a chance to escape poverty and grant them access to a higher education they may not otherwise be able to afford

By the 1980s, the term 'poverty draft' had gained traction as a way to describe the belief that the enlisted ranks of the military were made up of young people with 'limited economic opportunities.' Finnian L from Hoggard High School told the *New York Times* that he was 'disgusted by the ad campaigns trying to

brand the military as a way to get out of college debt.’ Program Coordinator for the Project on Youth and Non-military Opportunities Rocio Cordova describes the idea of the ‘poverty draft’ as a ‘draft-like system that pushes non-privileged people into enlisting because they lack access to jobs, income, and educational alternatives in their communities.’ Isn’t it sad that there are so few other options to receive further education for those less fortunate?

The Seattle Times reported that in 2004 all of the Army’s top 20 counties for recruitment had lower than national median incomes and 12 of them had higher poverty rates, according to the National Priorities Project. The South of the US, where there is a large culture of military service, produces 20% more recruits than would be expected, based on its youth population. States in the Northeast produce 20% fewer, according to NPP. Research director for the NPP Anita Dancs said that ‘a lot of the high recruitment rates are in the areas where there is not as much economic opportunity for young people.’ As well as educational and economic benefits, recruiters push the idea of community spirit and the chance to fight for your country. This idea offers a sense of stability to vulnerable young people, and the opportunity to be part of something, which many disadvantaged high school students may not have experienced before.

High school student Angel noted that military recruiters were telling students at her school, many of whom are undocumented, ‘distorted information’ about the benefits of military service based on their undocumented status. She told *In These Times*: ‘I always have to correct them because I don’t want them to join and not know the full truth about it. We would not be seeing these things at schools rich, white students attend.’ It is not hard to work out why this type of alleged misinformation is happening at recruitment events, but giving undocumented teenagers false hope of gaining citizenship for a country they would be risking their lives for is beyond immoral in my eyes.

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We would not be seeing these things at schools rich, white students attend

In 2006, Senator John Kerry came under fire after telling a group of students that they could either ‘work hard’ or ‘get stuck in Iraq.’ For those with few academic opportunities, the military is often presented as the only other alternative. Several charities and foundations have been set up in the US to combat this assumption and to help guide high school students into other career paths.

Truth in Recruitment, a foundation formed in 2011, works with students, families, and schools ‘to ensure students understand the consequences of a military career and their alternative options so they can make educated choices about their future.’ They also inform parents of their privacy rights, and ‘implement school policies regulating recruiter presence on campus.’ If high school students are informed of the opportunities and choices they have for education or job prospects, they may feel less pressured to join the military as it may no longer feel like their only option. I am not arguing that joining the military is a bad choice to make after you graduate, but programs such as *Truth in Recruitment* help to inform those low-income students, who have been presented with the idea that enlisting will provide them with opportunities, that the military is not their only pathway to these opportunities.

Only 14% of respondents in a 2017 Department of Defense poll of young people said it was likely that they would serve in the military in the next few years. However, 49% of survey respondents indicated that if they were to join the military, one of the reasons for joining would be to pay for future education.

The army has also tried other recruitment tactics, including creating a team of video gamers from within its ranks to reach potential prospects online. Maj. Gen. Frank Muth, head of the recruiting command, told *The Associated Press* in September 2018 that the army had plans to send recruiters to esports contests and CrossFit competitions. Esports industry consultant Rod Breslau spoke about the presence of military recruiters on gaming platforms and said that he thinks ‘it’s more insidious to have the military using it as a recruitment tool for young, impressionable people.’

In December 2019, as part of their push to increase recruiting efforts in 22 liberal-leaning cities, Army Secretary Ryan D. McCarthy visited officials from the Los Angeles Unified School District to push for

greater access. Patricia Heideman, who is in charge of high school instruction for the district, said that ‘from an educator perspective’ they ‘sometimes feel they are targeting our black and brown students and students of poverty.’

While some schools try to limit the number of recruiters that visit, others encourage them. In 2005, *The Seattle Times* reported that Magna Vista, where half the students received financial aid or free lunch, welcomed recruiters. School officials gave the recruiters a list of seniors to contact and encouraged upperclassmen to take a vocational test required by the military. Guidance counselor Karen Cecil said: ‘We expose them to the fact that the military is there, we’re setting the stage for students to know it’s an option, especially as a way to afford college.’

Many schools encourage students to take the military’s aptitude exam, the ASVAB, and that exposure during high school is one of the strongest predictors of enlistment rates, according to a 2018 report by the Institute for Defense Analyses. Young people from low-income areas are also incentivised to enlist by the military’s medical insurance coverage, something which privileged young people do not have to worry about. Cordova explained that young people from high-income households ‘have sufficient resources to meet their needs’ and they don’t require joining the military ‘to travel or learn a profession.’ This is not just the fault of the military recruiters, but the US government and the healthcare system as a whole. A healthcare system that forces young people into enlisting and putting their lives on the line just to receive medical insurance is surely a broken one.

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A healthcare system that forces young people into enlisting and putting their lives on the line just to receive medical insurance is surely a broken one

While the evidence does show that military recruiters are targeting low-income students and students of colour, the problems run deeper than that. The government not only encourages schools to allow military recruiters through their doors but actually requires their presence thanks to George Bush’s 2002 act. A lack of opportunities, high unemployment rates, and a large socio-economic divide, along with insanely high healthcare rates all contribute to low-income students being susceptible to the military’s recruitment tactics. These structures allow vulnerable students to be easy targets for military recruiters, as they push the idea of opportunity and stability, something which the government is unable to provide for them—unless they enlist, of course.

Who Signs Up to Fight? Makeup of U.S. Recruits Shows Glaring Disparity

More and more, new recruits come from the same small number of counties and are the children of old recruits.

Sgt. First Class Dustin Comes, who leads a recruiting station in Colorado Springs, said the high schools with the most military families are the biggest producers of recruits. Credit...Theo Stroomer for The New York Times

By [Dave Philipps](#) and [Tim Arango](#)

- Published Jan. 10, 2020 Updated Jan. 14, 2020

COLORADO SPRINGS — The sergeant in charge of one of the busiest Army recruiting centers in Colorado, Sgt. First Class Dustin Comes, joined the Army, in part, because his father served. Now two of his four children say they want to serve, too. And he will not be surprised if the other two make the same decision once they are a little older.

“Hey, if that’s what your calling is, I encourage it, absolutely,” said Sergeant Comes, who wore [a dagger-shaped patch](#) on his camouflage uniform, signifying that he had been in combat.

Enlisting, he said, enabled him to build a good life where, despite yearlong deployments to Iraq and Afghanistan, he felt proud of his work, got generous benefits, never worried about being laid off, and earned enough that his wife could stay home to raise their children.

“Show me a better deal for the common person,” he said.

Soldiers like him are increasingly making the United States military a family business. The men and women who sign up overwhelmingly come from counties in the South and a scattering of communities at the gates of military bases like Colorado Springs, which sits next to Fort Carson and several Air Force installations, and where the tradition of military service is deeply ingrained. More and more, new recruits are the children of old recruits. In 2019, 79 percent of Army recruits reported having a family member who served. For nearly 30 percent, it was a parent — a striking point in a nation where less than 1 percent of the population serves in the military.



The Powers Recruiting Station in Colorado Springs. In 2019, 79 percent of new Army recruits reported having a family member who served. Credit...Theo Stroomer for The New York Times

For years, military leaders have been sounding the alarm over the growing gulf between communities that serve and those that do not, warning that relying on a small number of counties that reliably produce soldiers is unsustainable, particularly now amid escalating tensions with Iran.

“A widening military-civilian divide increasingly impacts our ability to effectively recruit and sustain the force,” Anthony M. Kurta, acting under secretary of defense for personnel and readiness, told the National Commission on Military, National and Public Service last year. “This disconnect is characterized by misperceptions, a lack of knowledge and an inability to identify with those who serve. It threatens our ability to recruit the number of quality youth with the needed skill sets to maintain our advantage.”

To be sure, the idea of joining the military has lost much of its luster in nearly two decades of grinding war. The patriotic rush to enlist after the terrorist attacks of 2001 has faded. For a generation, enlisting has produced reliable hardship for troops and families, but [nothing that resembles victory](#). But the military families who have borne nearly all of the burden, and are the most cleareyed about the risks of war, are still the Americans who are most likely to encourage their sons and daughters to join.

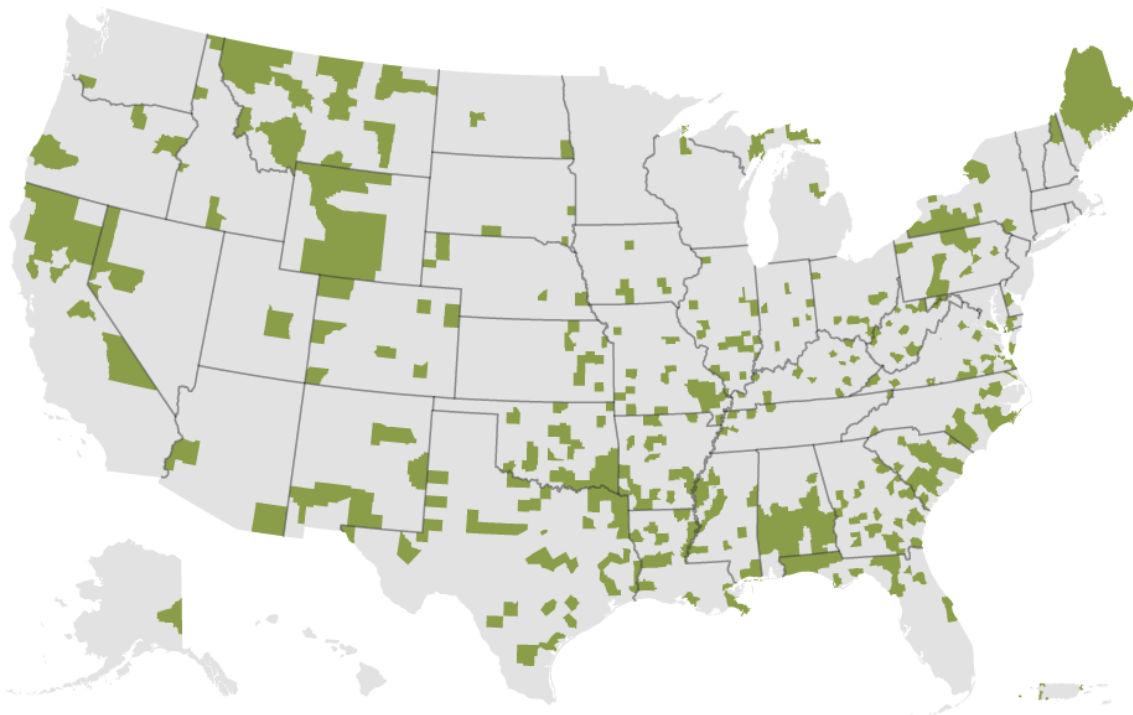
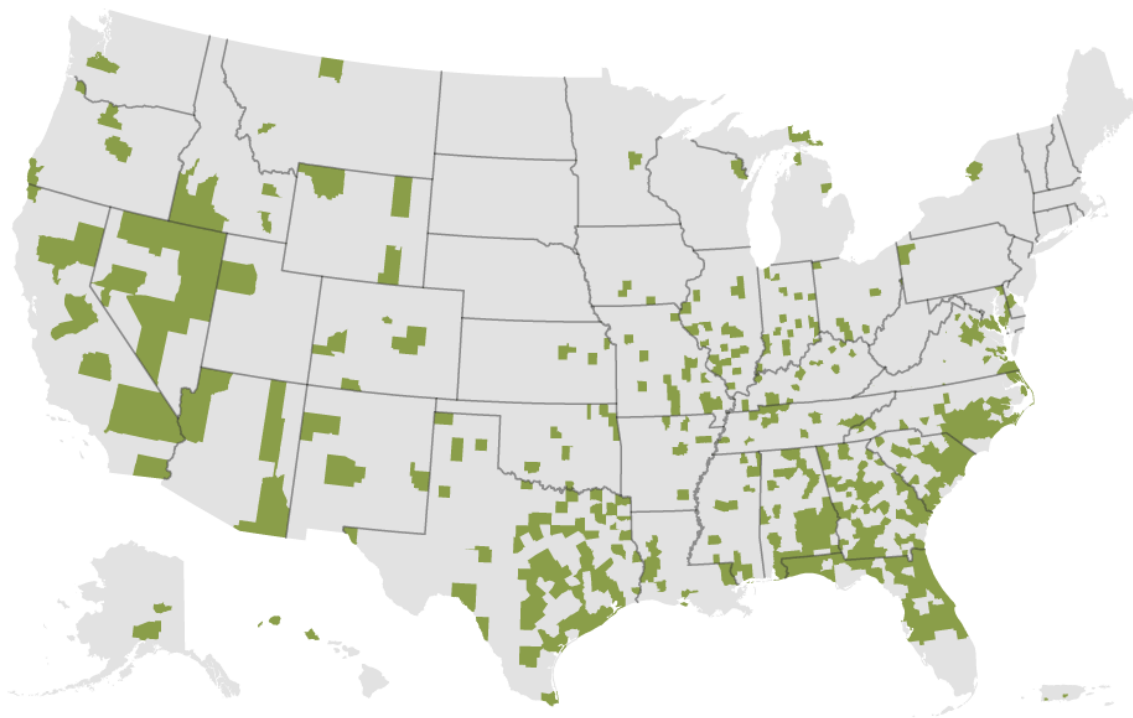
With the goal of recruiting about 68,000 soldiers in 2020, the Army is now trying to broaden its appeal beyond traditional recruitment pools. New marketing plays up future careers in medicine and tech, as well as generous tuition benefits for a generation crushed by student debt. The messaging often notes that most Army jobs are not in combat fields.

But for now, rates of military service remain far from equal in the United States, and the gap may continue to widen because a driving decision to enlist is whether a young person knows anyone who served in the military. In communities where veterans are plentiful, teachers, coaches, mothers, uncles and other mentors often steer youths toward military service. In communities where veterans are scarce, influential adults are more wary.

That has created a broad gap, easily seen on a map. The South, where the culture of military service runs deep and military installations are plentiful, produces 20 percent more recruits than would be expected, based on its youth population. The states in the Northeast, which have very few military bases and a lower percentage of veterans, produce 20 percent fewer.

Top Counties for Army Recruitment

Each map shows the 500 counties with the highest recruitment rates in a given year as a percentage of population, excluding counties with fewer than five recruits.



2018 / 1998

By Matthew Bloch | Source: U.S. Army

The main predictors are not based on class or race. Army data show service spread mostly evenly through middle-class and “downscale” groups. Youth unemployment turns out not to be the prime factor. And the racial makeup of the force is more or less in line with that of young Americans as a whole, though African-Americans are slightly more likely to serve. Instead, the best predictor is a person’s familiarity with the military.

“Those who understand military life are more likely to consider it as a career option than those who do not,” said Kelli Bland, a spokeswoman for the Army’s Recruiting Command.

That distinction has created glaring disparities across the country. In 2019, Fayetteville, N.C., which is home to Fort Bragg, provided more than twice as many military enlistment contracts as Manhattan, even though Manhattan has eight times as many people. Many of the new contracts in Fayetteville were soldiers signing up for second and third enlistments.

This was not always the case. Military service was once spread fairly evenly — at least geographically — throughout the nation because of the draft. But after the draft ended in 1973, enlistments shifted steadily south of the [Mason-Dixon line](#). The military's decision to close many bases in Northern states where long winters limited training only hastened the trend.

Today, students growing up in military communities are constantly exposed to the people who serve. Moms pick up their sons from day care in flight suits. Dads attend the fourth-grade holiday party in camouflage. High schools often have Junior Reserve Officer Training Corps programs in which students wear uniforms to class once a week and can earn credit for learning about science, leadership and fitness through a military framework.

Many schools encourage students to take the military's aptitude exam, [the ASVAB](#), in the way students nationwide are pushed to take the SAT.

That exposure during school is one of the strongest predictors of enlistment rates, according to [a 2018 report](#) by the Institute for Defense Analyses.

In Colorado Springs, the high schools with the highest number of military families are also the biggest producers of recruits, Sergeant Comes said, adding that parents aware of the military's camaraderie, stability and generous health, education and retirement benefits often march their children into his office and encourage them to join.

"We just tell them our story: 'This is where I was, one of six kids living in a trailer. This is where I am today.' Good pay check. Great benefits," he said, adding that even in good economic times, it is an easy sell. His recruiting station made its goals handily this month.

His biggest challenge is finding recruits before they are scooped up by recruiters from the Air Force, Navy and Marines, who work the same fertile neighborhoods.

The situation is markedly different in regions where few people traditionally join.

In Los Angeles, a region defined by liberal politics where many families are suspicious of the military, the Army has struggled to even gain access to high schools. By law, schools have to allow recruiters on campus once a semester, but administrators tightly control when and how recruiters can interact with students. Access is "very minimal," said Lt. Col. Tameka Wilson, the commander of the Los Angeles Recruiting Battalion.

Predictably, enlistment rates are low.

In 2019 the Army made a push to increase [recruiting efforts in 22 liberal-leaning cities](#) like Los Angeles. As part of that, Army Secretary Ryan D. McCarthy visited officials from the Los Angeles Unified School District in December to push for greater access.

"He was doing a sort of listening tour," said Patricia Heideman, who is in charge of high school instruction for the school district and said there was a perception the military preys on disadvantaged students. "I told him from the educator perspective, we sometimes feel they are

targeting our black and brown students and students of poverty,” she said. And therefore they are less likely to push enlistment.

Recognizing it cannot sustain recruitment numbers by relying only on the South and military communities, the Army has tried to broaden its appeal. Slick ads on social media offer less of the [guns-and-grunts](#) messaging of decades past. Instead they play up college benefits and career training in medical and tech fields.



“I’d always had an itch to serve in the military and be useful,” said Brett Dollar, a police officer in Colorado who is joining the Army. Credit...Theo Stroomer for The New York Times

Even within one state there are striking differences in how communities view military service. Colorado Springs produced 29 times as many enlistments in 2019 as nearby Boulder, a liberal university town.

“I grew up in Boulder, and the military appealed to me but it was just not in the culture, or my family,” said Brett Dollar, who now lives in Fort Collins, Colo. “The conversation was not ‘What do you want to do after high school?’ but ‘Which college are you going to go to?’”

She attended Middlebury College in Vermont before becoming a police officer in Fort Collins and, eventually, a law enforcement dog handler.

This fall, at age 32, she decided to enlist in the Army, drawn by the chance to work with dogs in security, bomb-sniffing and rescue missions around the world. She ships to basic training in about a week.

“I’d always had an itch to serve in the military and be useful,” she said. “I think it took me being on my own for a while to realize it was a possibility.”

She said she was going into the work knowing she could soon end up deployed to a combat zone.

“The Army is ultimately a war-fighting organization — you go in knowing that,” she said. “I guess I really didn’t see that as a downside. It’s a core value of mine to try to be of service.”

Dave Philipps reported from Colorado Springs and Tim Arango from Los Angeles.

Dave Philipps covers veterans and the military, and is a winner of the Pulitzer Prize for National Reporting. Since joining the Times in 2014, he has covered the military community from the ground up. [@David_Philipps](#) · [Facebook](#)

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A version of this article appears in print on Jan. 11, 2020, Section A, Page 10 of the New York edition with the headline: The Call to Serve Is Being Unevenly Embraced. [Order Reprints](#) | [Today’s Paper](#) | [Subscribe](#)

See The Weaponization Of Poverty: An Investigation Into United States Military Recruitment Practices In High Schools Of Low-Income Communities In The Inland Empire by Michael Springer-Gould (2020)

https://scholarship.claremont.edu/cgi/viewcontent.cgi?article=1117&context=pitzer_theses

Marginalized students pay the price of military recruitment efforts

With pandemic restrictions easing, military recruiters are returning to high school campuses while anti-recruitment efforts struggle



by Roberto Camacho April 18th, 2022

<https://prismreports.org/2022/04/18/marginalized-students-military-recruitment/>



ALAMEDA, CA - NOVEMBER 09: A job seeker (L) talks with a recruiter from the Oakland fire department during a job fair for veterans at the USS Hornet Sea, Air & Space Museum on November 9, 2017 in Alameda, California. Veterans, active duty military and military spouses attended a job fair aboard the USS Hornet Sea, Air & Space Museum. (Photo by Justin Sullivan/Getty Images)

The U.S. military utilizes a number of different recruitment methods to garner new enlistments, but their target audience has consistently remained the same: high schoolers, particularly young men from low-income and rural areas. Eighteen is the youngest age one can join the military without parental permission, but the armed forces still regularly market military propaganda in schools. Although the military does enjoy support within the public system, a grassroots movement of students, teachers, parents, and organizations has led efforts to reduce military recruitment presence and activities on high school campuses.

“We face an uphill battle not only because of the prominence of militarism in our society but [also] because there has been a lack of foresight by progressive people who aren’t thinking about what can happen 10 years down the line,” said Rick Jahnkow, former program coordinator for the nonprofit [Project on Youth & Non-Military Opportunities \(Project YANO\)](#) and a current member of the organization’s board of trustees.

The U.S. military has been an all-volunteer service since the end of the draft and the Vietnam War in 1973, making aggressive recruitment efforts essential to maintaining its [1.3 million-member](#) active-duty global military force. Military recruitment in public schools isn’t new, but the level of access the military has to students and their information has [increased alarmingly](#) over the past several decades. Notably, recruiters got a significant boost when then-President George W. Bush signed the [“No Child Left Behind” Act](#) into law in 2002—under Section 9528 of the act, schools can lose their federal funding if they fail to allow military recruiters the same level of access to students and their private information as they do to other recruiters from community colleges and universities.

Students and their families can decline to share their private information with the military. But while some schools have chosen an “opt-in” approach where affirmative permission from parents is needed before recruiters can initiate contact, most use an “opt-out” method where student information is given to recruiters unless parents explicitly say no. Schools can also be opaque about parents’ options to limit access to their children’s information, which disproportionately affects time- and resource-poor households, such as single parents, parents who work multiple jobs, those who are English language learners, and families who are simply unaware of these policies to begin with, by making them easier targets for recruiters.

To help even the odds for students and their families, organizations such as the National Network Opposing the Militarization of Youth ([NNOMY](#)), which includes Project YANO and [Truth In Recruitment](#), a Santa Barbara, California-based group that works to ensure students understand the consequences of a military career and their alternative options, provide advocacy and support to communities hoping to reduce recruitment activities and military presence on high school campuses. For example, Project YANO offers young people an alternative point of view to the often romanticized pitch given by recruiters, and much of that student outreach comes from members who are themselves armed forces veterans. However, advocates are under no illusions about the

immense challenges they face by going up against the full might of the U.S. military's financial and political resources, and its grip on American culture.

Baiting the hook for students in need

Unlike most other developed nations, the U.S. allows military recruiters to actively work within its educational system. Recruiters visit thousands of high schools across the country annually, recruiting students who are still minors, setting up tables in cafeterias and hallways, during career fairs, and even at school sporting events. In many instances, they're allowed to freely roam school grounds in search of students, or often sit with students eating alone in the cafeteria. Military recruiters will often spin elaborate yarns promising excitement, adventure, and being "all you can be" to entice young people.

In reality, military recruiters will often peddle false hope for honor and acclaim and make exaggerated promises of financial reward. This has been underscored by fluctuating enthusiasm for the military among youth.

According to a [2020 poll conducted by the Department of Defense](#), 11% of respondents ages 16-24 said they were likely to serve in the military in the next few years. As a result, the U.S. military has ramped up its recruitment efforts, often resorting to deceptive tactics to prey on the naïveté and oftentimes desperation of many young people. Recruiters regularly sell the notion that in order to pay for college, learn valuable skills, or even serve their communities, joining the military is the right path.

However, the potential drawbacks of joining the military for recruits of color often manifest themselves in a variety of unsettling and troubling ways. In fact, according to a study organized by Blue Star Families' called "[Social Impact Research 2021: The Diverse Experiences of Military & Veteran Families of Color](#)," 42% of service members of color surveyed turned down an assignment or permanent change of station order because of concerns about racism and discrimination. Another 34% of veterans surveyed said that concerns about racial and ethnic discrimination were a factor in whether or not to remain in the military.

"We try to educate people on the limitation of those so-called 'benefits' that are being promised, when in fact they're rarely anything that can truly be promised," Jahnkow said.

U.S. Army Public Affairs was contacted for comment without response.

While the military has a number of different approaches to entice potential recruits, the prospect of funding for college has been among one of the key “benefits” recruiters have used to entice students leery of becoming trapped under a mountain of student debt. Jahnkow explained that recruiters will often use distorted financial incentives to sway students into enlistment because they know money to pay for college is a key motivator, especially in low-wage communities, where youth are [underrepresented in higher education](#). In fact, college benefits for military personnel aren’t guaranteed and depend on the circumstances around one’s discharge from the military.

“You have to get a full, honorable discharge in order to access those benefits,” said Kate Connell, former executive director and one of the co-founders of Truth In Recruitment. “If you get a gentle discharge or even a medical discharge you’ll lose those benefits.”

The promise of potential citizenship is another tactic that military recruiters often dangle before potential recruits who are undocumented. The military doesn’t and can’t grant U.S. citizenship directly to undocumented people, which is handled by an entirely different government agency.

“Only people who have legal residency can join the military,” Jahnkow said. “Anybody who is undocumented technically is violating the law if they succeed in enlisting because they have to conceal that fact.”

Currently, the only advantage that a legal resident could have by enlisting is having their application for citizenship sped up, although that isn’t guaranteed. Jahnkow also noted that although Latinx people are still slightly underrepresented in the armed forces, recruiters have quickly shifted their strategies to court Latinx communities as the fastest-growing population in the country after Asian Americans. Such tactics have included running ads targeting Spanish-speaking parents rather than students.

Project YANO has been a primary source for Spanish language literature and information on curbing military recruitment nationwide for many years. Three-quarters of Project YANO’s board of trustees is fluent in Spanish, and the organization regularly collaborates with the Chicano student advocacy group Movimiento Estudiantil Chicano de Aztlán ([M.E.Ch.A.](#)). They’ve even

created brochures specifically made for Spanish-speaking parents to inform them about the inherent risks their children face if they pursue military careers.

“Most high school-aged students have English speaking skills,” Jahnkow said. “It’s the parents who can be easily misled by recruiters if they have very limited English skills.”

Normalizing military presence in school communities

In many ways, some of the biggest roadblocks to curbing military recruitment in public schools come not from the recruiters, but from school administrators. Historically, efforts to regulate the presence of military recruiters in schools, even in settings beyond public schools like [higher education](#), have produced strong opposition. Many military and veterans groups claim that such steps are “anti-military” and undermine their ability to recruit members. In some cases, military recruiters have such close relationships with school administrations that they are a regular presence in high schools, so much so that students and staff perceive those recruiters as school employees. Advocates noted how the normalization of military recruiters as an everyday part of a school’s community doesn’t just increase their access to students; it creates a false sense of familiarity between students and recruiters that can make students more receptive to being recruited.

In 2018, Truth In Recruitment helped spearhead a movement to remove a noncommissioned California National Guard recruiter who actually had an office on [Santa Maria High School’s](#) campus. Although the recruiter was officially listed as a “volunteer” who was supposed to facilitate an anti-bullying and holistic “rehabilitation” program, the office essentially served as a de facto recruitment center. Literature, pamphlets, and banners for the California National Guard were plastered both inside and outside of the recruiter’s office. A California Public Records Act request revealed that school policy dictated that volunteers could not use campus space to promote another business, and the recruiter was eventually removed. The school’s principal, however, was not happy and subsequently banned Truth in Recruitment from participating in career day events or giving presentations to students on campus.

Military efforts to recruit high schoolers were [slowed down](#) by the COVID-19 pandemic and the subsequent closure of campuses between 2020 and 2021.

However, those same obstacles have also hindered anti-military recruitment groups from reaching students, even as children have returned to campus and schools have resumed more regular operations. As campuses have slowly reopened, some educators have noticed the disproportionate favoritism military recruiters receive in public schools, particularly those that serve low-income and communities of color.

“Until people who oppose these wars get involved in the education system where the seeds are being planted, they will forever be marginalized in their efforts to mobilize opposition against those wars.”

RICK JAHNKOW

“Since we’ve returned to in-person instruction, military recruitment on our campus has been a near-daily occurrence,” said Marco Amaral, a special education teacher and [board president](#) of the South Bay Union School District in Chula Vista. “I see somebody from the military on our campus nearly four out of five days a week, while I’ll see a CSU [California State University] or UC [University of California] recruiter maybe once a month on campus.”

Additionally, student activism around military recruitment in schools has lagged compared to other contemporary student movements, despite an overall drop in enthusiasm for the military among youth. Amaral speculates that student activists’ attention is currently more focused on other contemporary social issues that seem to more directly and immediately affect young people. While military recruitment and the broader anti-war movement are interwoven with many of those issues—such as low wages, immigration policies, xenophobia, and racism—the connections can be murky, especially within a culture that still valorizes military service and normalizes military recruitment targeting young people.

“I think a lot of people don’t understand how ingrained military culture is in the public school system,” Amaral said. “And given the dynamics of campuses that serve under-resourced, historically marginalized students, it seems that

unfortunately organizing against military recruitment is far down on the list of priorities.”

Jessica Ortega, a Spanish and English language development (ELD) teacher at Oceanside High school, says that students can also be deterred from organizing on campus when a school administration has a cozy relationship with the military. Oceanside High lies a mere three miles from Marine Corps Base [Camp Pendleton](#) and since many administrators hold the military in high regard, student activists would likely run into significant pushback.

“Although our student population is mostly kids of color, our administration and teachers are not,” Ortega said. “White teachers and principals believe the military will help the kids advance as adults.”

Planting seeds in hostile land

Some notable gains have been made in limiting military recruitment and presence on campuses. In the past, Project YANO has held presentations in schools, participated in career fairs, handed out flyers outside of campuses, and supplied material support to students who’ve led their own campaigns to limit military recruitment in schools. In 2009, it joined the student-led [“Education, not Arms” coalition](#) in demanding that the San Diego Unified School District prohibit programs for weapons training on shooting ranges that operated in 11 high schools through the Junior Reserve Officers’ Training Corps (JROTC). They also confronted the school district with the fact that students were involuntarily being placed in JROTC classes, noting that many low-income students and students of color were being diverted away from higher education and into the military. The effort was successful, with the San Diego Unified School District ultimately [banning on-campus rifle training](#) by the JROTC.

Other groups, such as Truth In Recruitment, have also made strides to curb military recruitment in the Santa Barbara public school system. In 2014, after a two-year campaign, the Santa Barbara School Board passed a district policy regulating recruiter access to students. The policy limits recruiters to two visits a year and bans soliciting student contact information directly from students and simulated weapons displays. It also requires distributing an opt-out form barring the release of student directory information and disallows any disruptions of normal school activities, such as recruiting during class time.

Unfortunately, the “normal” that officials and policymakers are so eager to have Americans return to includes a general lack of awareness and apathy toward how deeply military worship is embedded in American culture and what a military recruitment presence in public civilian institutions like schools can mean for vulnerable students from marginalized communities. Faced with the loss of both funding and momentum due to the pandemic, many anti-military recruitment groups are still trying to regain their foothold inside public schools.

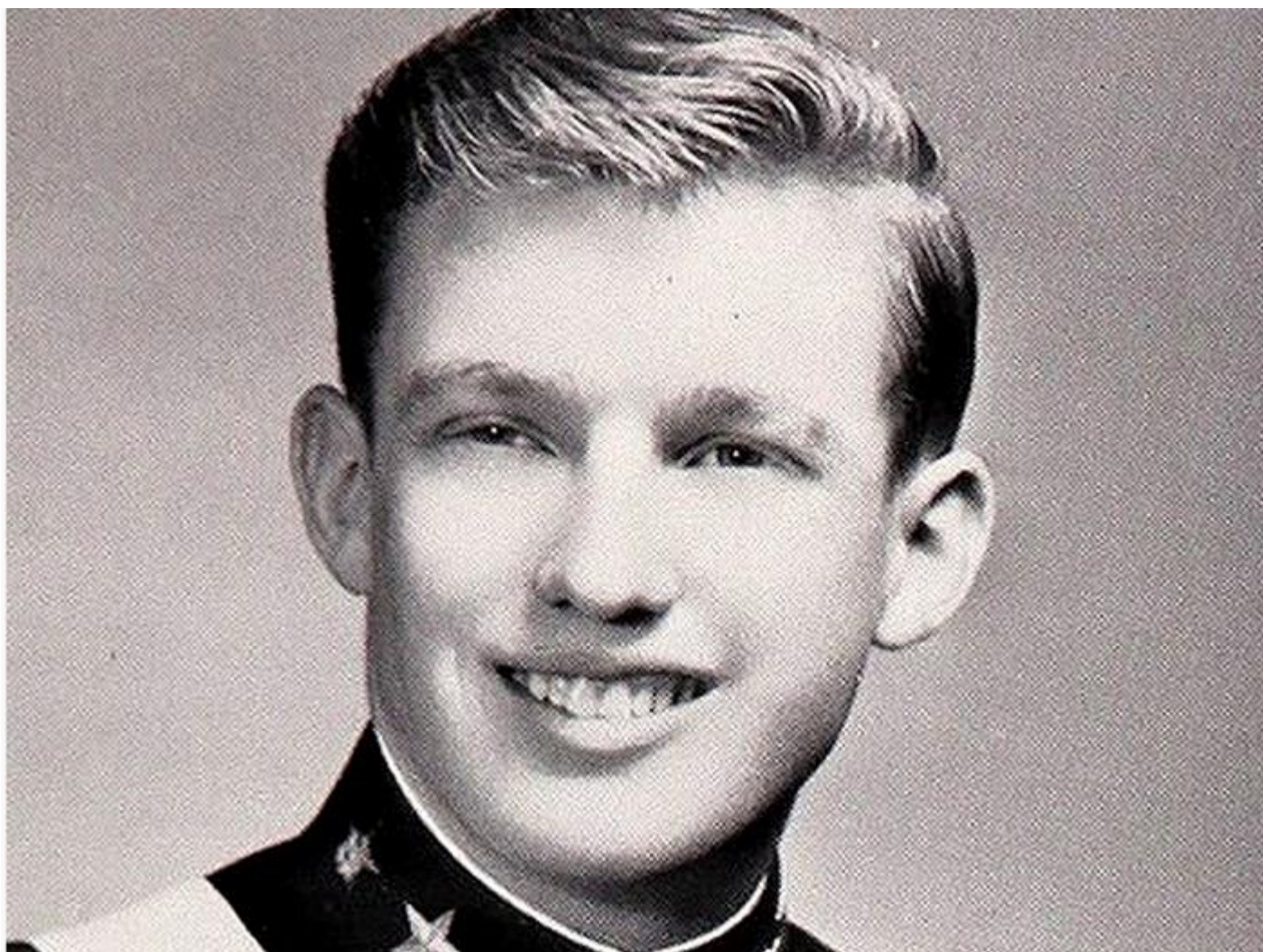
“The kind of issues that we are addressing are not the most popular ones, even among what we would call ‘progressive’ activists,” Jahnkow said. “Trying to confront and counter the effects of militarism and its effects on people and communities is just not something that draws a lot of support.”

Despite a lull in activism, organizers, parents, and teachers remain dedicated to ensuring that schools don’t become de facto recruiting stations and that all students are fully informed about their options, understand the risks of enlisting, and have equal access to educational opportunities. Jahnkow noted that given the number of potential military conflicts looming on the horizon, counter-narrative efforts to military recruitment pitches in schools are even more critical.

“What Project YANO and other orgs really do is seed planting, but the military has been seed planting on a daily basis in schools everywhere for decades,” Jahnkow said. “And until people who oppose these wars get involved in the education system where the seeds are being planted, they will forever be marginalized in their efforts to mobilize opposition against those wars.”

Donald Trump avoided the military draft 5 times, but it wasn't uncommon for young men from influential families to do so during the Vietnam War

<https://www.businessinsider.com/donald-trump-avoided-the-military-draft-which-was-common-at-the-time-vietnam-war-2018-12>



A young Donald Trump. Classmates.com

President Donald Trump received military draft deferments five times — once for bad feet and four times for college.

Thanks in part to the deferments, he did not serve in Vietnam.

The president has received criticism for dodging the draft, including from members of Congress. Democratic Sen. Tammy Duckworth, a Purple Heart recipient, once called him "Cadet Bone Spurs."

Like Trump, many other young men from wealthy families found ways to avoid the draft.

A young Donald Trump was seemingly in good health when he graduated from the University of Pennsylvania in 1968, as the United States was mired in one of the bloodiest years of the Vietnam War.

The 22-year-old — who was 6 feet 2 inches tall and an athlete — had already avoided the military draft four times in order to complete his college education.

But that spring, as he was set to graduate, he received a diagnosis that landed him a fifth draft deferment that would once again keep him out of Vietnam: bone spurs.

President Trump sat out the war and instead went on to join his father in business. The New York Times reported that the president, as a young man, said his "heel spurs," which are protrusions caused by calcium buildup on the heel bone, made him unfit for service.

Heel spurs can be cured by stretching, orthotics, or surgery. The president said he never got surgery for the condition.

"Over a period of time, it healed up," he said, according to the Times.

The diagnosis came two years after Trump had been declared available for service and passed a physical exam.

On Wednesday, The Times reported that a Queens podiatrist who rented office space from Fred Trump, the president's father, might have given the president his diagnosis as a courtesy to his father.

Trump, however, wasn't the only young man who managed to avoid being sent to Vietnam because he belonged to an influential family who could afford him a college education — or a favorable medical diagnosis.

Draft deferment wasn't uncommon during the Vietnam era — but it frequently benefited a specific group of young men, particularly those who had the means to afford a college education or enough family influence to obtain a deferment.

Read more: Democratic senator calls Trump 'Cadet Bone Spurs' during fiery speech on the shutdown's impact on the military

David Cortright, a scholar and peace activist, found that more than half of the 27 million American men eligible to be drafted during the Vietnam era were deferred, exempted, or disqualified.

Young men could typically avoid the draft by being in college, getting married, having children, or being diagnosed with a medical condition that made them unable to serve.

According to a report by the American Economic Review, the college-enrollment rate among young American men rose — and then fell — abruptly between 1965 and 1975. According to the report, many have said these patterns resulted from draft deferments.

This led to the majority of those who served in Vietnam to come from low-income families, a point made in 2017 by the late Arizona Sen. John McCain, a Vietnam prisoner of war.

"One aspect of the conflict, by the way, that I will never ever countenance is that we drafted the lowest income level of America," McCain said in an interview. "And the highest income level found a doctor that would say that they had a bone spur. That is wrong. That is wrong. If we're going to ask every American to serve, every American should serve."

Elliot Ackerman, an Iraq and Afghanistan veteran, wrote in a Time magazine article that "student deferments and various loopholes most often exclusively leveraged by the well-off, or influential, the brunt of that conflict fell to America's poorest, most marginalized citizens, creating a toxic social rift."

Notable politicians, such as Joe Biden and Dick Cheney, also received multiple draft deferments. Biden received draft deferments because of his college education. Once he was out of college, he received a deferment for an asthma condition.

Like Trump, Cheney received five draft deferments — four for college and one for being a father. According to The Washington Post, Cheney was classified as a 1-A by the Selective Service in 1965. This made him "available immediately for military service." Cheney got married soon after the classification.

Months later, Lyndon B. Johnson said draft calls would be doubled, meaning married men without children, previously exempted from the draft, could now be drafted, but married men with children were exempt. Soon after, Cheney was classified 3-A by the Selective Service because his wife was now pregnant with their first child.

Other young men didn't avoid the draft but had strings pulled to be assigned to noncombat zones, such as Germany and Korea, or other areas of the military.

Former President George W. Bush joined the Air National Guard, in Texas, which kept him stateside during the Vietnam War. Critics have long contended that Bush received his cushy role in the guard because commanding officers sought to curry the favor of Bush's father, the late President George H.W. Bush, who was an influential Texas congressman at the time.

Trump: Americans Who Died in War Are 'Losers' and 'Suckers'

The president has repeatedly disparaged the intelligence of service members, and asked that wounded veterans be kept out of military parades, multiple sources tell *The Atlantic*.

By Jeffrey Goldberg

<https://www.theatlantic.com/politics/archive/2020/09/trump-americans-who-died-at-war-are-losers-and-suckers/615997/>



Donald Trump greets families of the fallen at Arlington National Cemetery on Memorial Day 2017. (Chip Somodevilla / Getty)

SEPTEMBER 4, 2020

When President Donald Trump canceled a visit to the Aisne-Marne American Cemetery near Paris in 2018, he blamed rain for the last-minute decision, saying

that “the helicopter couldn’t fly” and that the Secret Service wouldn’t drive him there. Neither claim was true.

Trump rejected the idea of the visit because he feared his hair would become disheveled in the rain, and because he did not believe it important to honor American war dead, according to four people with firsthand knowledge of the discussion that day. In a conversation with senior staff members on the morning of the scheduled visit, Trump said, “Why should I go to that cemetery? It’s filled with losers.” In a separate conversation on the same trip, Trump referred to the more than 1,800 marines who lost their lives at Belleau Wood as “suckers” for getting killed.

Belleau Wood is a consequential battle in American history, and the ground on which it was fought is venerated by the Marine Corps. America and its allies stopped the German advance toward Paris there in the spring of 1918. But Trump, on that same trip, asked aides, “Who were the good guys in this war?” He also said that he didn’t understand why the United States would intervene on the side of the Allies.

Trump’s understanding of concepts such as patriotism, service, and sacrifice has interested me since he expressed contempt for the war record of the late Senator John McCain, who spent more than five years as a prisoner of the North Vietnamese. “He’s not a war hero,” Trump said in 2015 while running for the Republican nomination for president. “I like people who weren’t captured.”

There was no precedent in American politics for the expression of this sort of contempt, but the performatively patriotic Trump did no damage to his candidacy by attacking McCain in this manner. Nor did he set his campaign back by attacking the parents of Humayun Khan, an Army captain who was killed in Iraq in 2004.

Trump remained fixated on McCain, one of the few prominent Republicans to continue criticizing him after he won the nomination. When McCain died, in August 2018, Trump told his senior staff, according to three sources with direct knowledge of this event, “We’re not going to support that loser’s funeral,” and he became furious, according to witnesses, when he saw flags lowered to half-staff. “What the fuck are we doing that for? Guy was a fucking loser,” the president

told aides. Trump was not invited to McCain's funeral. (These sources, and others quoted in this article, spoke on condition of anonymity. The White House did not return earlier calls for comment, but Alyssa Farah, a White House spokesperson, emailed me this statement shortly after this story was posted: "This report is false. President Trump holds the military in the highest regard. He's demonstrated his commitment to them at every turn: delivering on his promise to give our troops a much needed pay raise, increasing military spending, signing critical veterans reforms, and supporting military spouses. This has no basis in fact.")

Trump's understanding of heroism has not evolved since he became president. According to sources with knowledge of the president's views, he seems to genuinely not understand why Americans treat former prisoners of war with respect. Nor does he understand why pilots who are shot down in combat are honored by the military. On at least two occasions since becoming president, according to three sources with direct knowledge of his views, Trump referred to former President George H. W. Bush as a "loser" for being shot down by the Japanese as a Navy pilot in World War II. (Bush escaped capture, but eight other men shot down during the same mission were caught, tortured, and executed by Japanese soldiers.)

When lashing out at critics, Trump often reaches for illogical and corrosive insults, and members of the Bush family have publicly opposed him. But his cynicism about service and heroism extends even to the World War I dead buried outside Paris—people who were killed more than a quarter century before he was born. Trump finds the notion of military service difficult to understand, and the idea of volunteering to serve especially incomprehensible. (The president did not serve in the military; he received a medical deferment from the draft during the Vietnam War because of the alleged presence of bone spurs in his feet. In the 1990s, Trump said his efforts to avoid contracting sexually transmitted diseases constituted his "personal Vietnam.")

On Memorial Day 2017, Trump visited Arlington National Cemetery, a short drive from the White House. He was accompanied on this visit by John Kelly, who was then the secretary of homeland security, and who would, a short time later, be named the White House chief of staff. The two men were set to visit Section 60, the 14-acre area of the cemetery that is the burial ground for those killed in America's most recent wars. Kelly's son Robert is buried in Section 60. A first lieutenant in the Marine Corps, Robert Kelly was killed in 2010 in

Afghanistan. He was 29. Trump was meant, on this visit, to join John Kelly in paying respects at his son's grave, and to comfort the families of other fallen service members. But according to sources with knowledge of this visit, Trump, while standing by Robert Kelly's grave, turned directly to his father and said, "I don't get it. What was in it for them?" Kelly (who declined to comment for this story) initially believed, people close to him said, that Trump was making a ham-handed reference to the selflessness of America's all-volunteer force. But later he came to realize that Trump simply does not understand non-transactional life choices.

"He can't fathom the idea of doing something for someone other than himself," one of Kelly's friends, a retired four-star general, told me. "He just thinks that anyone who does anything when there's no direct personal gain to be had is a sucker. There's no money in serving the nation." Kelly's friend went on to say, "Trump can't imagine anyone else's pain. That's why he would say this to the father of a fallen marine on Memorial Day in the cemetery where he's buried."

I've asked numerous general officers over the past year for their analysis of Trump's seeming contempt for military service. They offer a number of explanations. Some of his cynicism is rooted in frustration, they say. Trump, unlike previous presidents, tends to believe that the military, like other departments of the federal government, is beholden only to him, and not the Constitution. Many senior officers have expressed worry about Trump's understanding of the rules governing the use of the armed forces. This issue came to a head in early June, during demonstrations in Washington, D.C., in response to police killings of Black people. James Mattis, the retired Marine general and former secretary of defense, lambasted Trump at the time for ordering law-enforcement officers to forcibly clear protesters from Lafayette Square, and for using soldiers as props: "When I joined the military, some 50 years ago, I swore an oath to support and defend the Constitution," Mattis wrote. "Never did I dream that troops taking that same oath would be ordered under any circumstance to violate the Constitutional rights of their fellow citizens—much less to provide a bizarre photo op for the elected commander-in-chief, with military leadership standing alongside."

Another explanation is more quotidian, and aligns with a broader understanding of Trump's material-focused worldview. The president believes that nothing is worth doing without the promise of monetary payback, and that talented people

who don't pursue riches are "losers." (According to eyewitnesses, after a White House briefing given by the then-chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, General Joe Dunford, Trump turned to aides and said, "That guy is smart. Why did he join the military?")

Yet another, related, explanation concerns what appears to be Trump's pathological fear of appearing to look like a "sucker" himself. His capacious definition of *sucker* includes those who lose their lives in service to their country, as well as those who are taken prisoner, or are wounded in battle. "He has a lot of fear," one officer with firsthand knowledge of Trump's views said. "He doesn't see the heroism in fighting." Several observers told me that Trump is deeply anxious about dying or being disfigured, and this worry manifests itself as disgust for those who have suffered. Trump recently claimed that he has received the bodies of slain service members "many, many" times, but in fact he has traveled to Dover Air Force Base, the transfer point for the remains of fallen service members, only four times since becoming president. In another incident, Trump falsely claimed that he had called "virtually all" of the families of service members who had died during his term, then began rush-shipping condolence letters when families said the president was not telling the truth.

Trump has been, for the duration of his presidency, fixated on staging military parades, but only of a certain sort. In a 2018 White House planning meeting for such an event, Trump asked his staff not to include wounded veterans, on grounds that spectators would feel uncomfortable in the presence of amputees. "Nobody wants to see that," he said.

[Jeffrey Goldberg](#) is the editor in chief of *The Atlantic* and a recipient of the National Magazine Award for Reporting. He is the author of [Prisoners: A Story of Friendship and Terror](#).

Trump Has Mocked the U.S. Military His Whole Life

Egged on by his father, the U.S. president began expressing contempt for Americans who fight in wars as far back as high school, his classmates say.

By **Michael Hirsh**, a senior correspondent at *Foreign Policy*.

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<https://foreignpolicy.com/2020/09/08/trump-mocked-us-military-troops-losers-whole-life/>



U.S. President Donald Trump salutes graduating West Point cadets.

U.S. President Donald Trump salutes cadets at the 2020 U.S. Military Academy graduation ceremony in West Point, New York, on June 13. TIMOTHY A. CLARY/AFP VIA GETTY IMAGES

SEPTEMBER 8, 2020, 12:05 PM

Perhaps no one was less surprised last week when it was reported that U.S. President Donald Trump had called American war dead “losers” and “suckers” than his former high school classmate George M. White.

The 74-year-old retired Army veteran was Trump’s superior—the first captain, or highest-ranking cadet—in Trump’s 1964 graduating class at the New York Military Academy. White said he witnessed up close Trump’s contempt for military service, discipline, and tradition, as well his ungoverned sense of entitlement, all helped along by his father Fred Trump’s generous donations to the school.

“No, those remarks absolutely didn’t surprise me. In my dealings with him he was a heartless, obnoxious son of a bitch,” White told me in an interview over the weekend.

According to White and other former classmates at the academy, Trump's five years there, coupled with the disregard for U.S. military traditions he learned at his father's knee, helps explain a great deal of the president's reported contempt for those who fought, died, or were wounded in America's wars, as well as his skeptical view of the need for the United States to fight in places like Vietnam and Iraq.

According to the *Atlantic* magazine, during a trip to France to mark the 100th anniversary of the end of World War I, Trump referred to the more than 1,800 U.S. Marines who lost their lives at Belleau Wood as "suckers." Indicating that he didn't understand why the United States had intervened at all in Europe in 1917, Trump also reportedly asked aides, "Who were the good guys in this war?"

The *Atlantic* article, portions of which have been corroborated by the Associated Press, the *Washington Post*, and Fox News, also reported that when Trump aborted a visit to another World War I cemetery, blaming the weather, he remarked, "Why should I go to that cemetery? It's filled with losers." In addition, Trump reportedly said that the presence of maimed U.S. veterans would upset spectators at a military parade, commenting, "Nobody wants to see that."

Trump's comments appeared to be in line with the attitude he reportedly evinced on Memorial Day 2017, when he visited the grave of 1st Lt. Robert Kelly, the son of his then-homeland security secretary and later chief of staff John Kelly. Standing at the grave of the younger Kelly, who died in Afghanistan in 2010, Trump reportedly turned to the secretary and said: "I don't get it. What was in it for them?"

Trump and the White House have denied reports about his disdain for the sacrifices of the U.S. military. "If people really exist that would have said that, they're lowlifes and they're liars," Trump told reporters on Sept. 3. "And I would be willing to swear on anything that I never said that about our fallen heroes. There is nobody that respects them more."

In the aftermath of the controversy over his demeaning of U.S. service members, Trump has sought to portray himself as an anti-war candidate who has faced down trigger-happy military service chiefs and will pull out of "endless wars" to keep soldiers safe.

"I'm not saying the military is in love with me—the soldiers are," Trump said at a news conference Monday. "The top people in the Pentagon probably aren't, because they want to do nothing but fight wars so that all of those wonderful companies that make the bombs and make the planes and make everything else stay happy. But we're getting out of the endless wars, you know how we're doing."

U.S. Secretary of State Mike Pompeo addresses the virtual Republican convention in a pre-recorded video from Jerusalem, Israel, on Aug. 25.

Is Trump Touting His Diplomatic Achievements to Get Reelected?

Both parties have featured speeches from key diplomats at their conventions, with Mike Pompeo making a controversial cameo at the RNC—but they aren't proposing much that's new.

IT'S DEBATABLE

EMMA ASHFORD, MATTHEW KROENIG

Trump is certainly not alone in questioning the wisdom of U.S. military involvement in Vietnam and Iraq, which are now widely considered major strategic errors, or even in World War I—a still-debated intervention orchestrated by a formerly pacifist president, Woodrow Wilson. White, Trump's former superior at the New York Military Academy, said he agrees with the basic idea of the president's opposition to many overseas deployments, saying that if it weren't for Trump's contemptuous attitude toward the military, "he'd be perfect."

Since taking office, many of Trump's actions have borne out that oft-repeated skepticism about U.S. military deployments abroad. In 2018, he announced an abrupt withdrawal of troops from Afghanistan, even before formally launching peace talks with the Taliban, and said he wanted to leave Syria as well. In 2019 he was widely criticized for abruptly abandoning Kurdish fighters in Syria who had fought and died to help the United States remove the Islamic State. This July, Trump also announced the withdrawal of nearly 12,000 U.S. troops from Germany, with no strategic rationale given.

Against that, Trump has lavished money on the Pentagon since taking office, boosting defense spending in each of the last three years, while he has yet to wind down the "endless war" in Afghanistan as promised, with the Taliban moving new forces into place against the U.S.-supported Afghan government.

Trump's attitude toward the military, then, is fundamentally ambivalent: He mocks the very idea of service, sacrifice, or discipline, but he likes shiny medals, big parades, and deadly weapons. He has sought to portray himself as a tough and aggressive leader who understands the military better than generals do, yet he has repeatedly sought to avoid war.

As president, he cultivated a love-hate relationship with the military. Trump initially picked leading generals as top aides, including retired Marine Gen. James Mattis as defense secretary, and former Army Lt. Gen. H.R. McMaster as national security advisor, in addition to Kelly, also a retired Marine general, at the Department of Homeland Security. Initially he called them America's best, once calling Mattis "the closest thing to Gen. George Patton that we have, and it's about time." But he dismissed the same military advisors later in his first term, calling some of them "losers" and "a bunch of dopes and babies" because "we don't win any wars anymore," according to the book *A Very Stable Genius* by the *Washington Post* reporters Philip Rucker and Carol Leonnig.

“This whole thing is as much about his disrespect for all types of service as about the military, but it was clear to me he saw value in claiming military bona fides,” said Michael D’Antonio, a Trump biographer.

Much of that ambivalence was also on display during Trump’s time at the military academy, which he has said in the past gave him an understanding of military service greater than that of actual veterans, as D’Antonio recounts. Trump said that his time at the New York Military Academy gave him “more training militarily than a lot of the guys that go into the military,” D’Antonio wrote in his book *The Truth About Trump*.

White scoffs at the notion that Trump ever had any respect for the military, and he laughed about Trump’s efforts to paint his time at the academy as a genuine military initiation. “I went into the U.S. Army during Vietnam in 1968. I served a tour in Korea,” said White, whose last name at the time he was attending the New York Military Academy was Witek. “When I got into basic training I realized very quickly that at the New York Military Academy we were just play-acting. What we had been taught was a sort of surface military thing.”

But the academy did leave Trump with his love of superficial military grandeur, especially parades and medals. In 2016, then-candidate Trump told a supporter who gave him a copy of his Purple Heart: “I always wanted to get the Purple Heart. This was much easier.”

“Like most ex-military, I detest his love of having parades and having real military personnel salute him,” said Alan Lapidus, a former Trump family architect, who enlisted in the military in 1957 as a combat engineer.

Trump’s efforts at heroic self-branding also began at the academy, said White and Sandy McIntosh, another former cadet who knew Trump and his family well. Trump began wearing decorations and medals he didn’t earn, especially for academic or military achievement, and got himself placed at the head of the Columbus Day military parade in New York City as a cadet, White and McIntosh recall. “I did very well under the military system,” Trump told the *Washington Post* in January 2016. “I became one of the top guys at the whole school.”

His former classmates disagree. “One of the things that struck me was I don’t recall him being a good student at all,” McIntosh said. “I was two years younger than him and he asked me to go over his essays for him and improve them. It was the only time I got to see the nature of his disability. I think his grades were mostly in the D-plus or C-minus range.”

Both White and McIntosh said the incorrigible and arrogant behavior and insubordination that had prompted Trump’s parents to send him to the military academy in the first place continued at the school. What they witnessed tends to corroborate *Too Much and Never Enough: How My Family Created the World’s Most Dangerous Man*, the recent family tell-all by Trump’s niece Mary Trump. She reported

that Fred Trump Sr., whom she described as a “high-functioning sociopath,” helped turn his son into an entitled, self-aggrandizing narcissist whom no one could control.

According to White, who is the same age as Trump, “my mother was confronted by Mrs. Trump on three separate occasions at the academy and what she said validates what Mary Trump wrote in that book. She cornered my mother and all she talked about was how she couldn’t control Donald and he wouldn’t listen to her. She was distraught. She pressed my mother to find a magic solution to make Donald listen.” Instead, White said, Trump regularly ignored the orders given by him and other superiors.

“The most significant incident, which I got into big trouble for, was when we were taking a picture in May of 1964, and Donald Trump refused to draw his sword. I’m the first captain and I order present arms and there are five guys behind me and they draw. But he refuses. I hear behind me, ‘Trump, draw your sword.’ Donald refuses. The picture gets taken. ... He was defying a direct order, showing his defiance,” White said. “He was ‘being Trump,’ showing that his ego was more powerful than anybody’s. He later showed that picture around to show how defiant he was because he didn’t draw the sword.”

White and McIntosh also believe that Trump inflated his grades and that his father’s influence—and deep pockets—were responsible for bumping him up from lowly supply sergeant to cadet captain in his senior year.

“Trump was over-privileged,” White said. “His father was rich, and he was protected. His father always considered him a genius. Trump was developing this alternative reality even then, and it was allowed to flourish because he was allowed to by the school supervisors. They directly ordered me to stay away from Trump. Everybody knew Fred was pulling out his checkbook.”

Trump’s apparent disdain for the military continues a long family tradition. His grandfather left Germany to avoid military service in the late 1800s, while his father never served. According to Mary Trump’s book, both Fred Trump Sr. and Donald Trump harshly criticized the decision by her father, the president’s older brother, Fred Trump Jr., to join the U.S. Air National Guard. Trump himself sought multiple draft deferments to avoid the Vietnam War. A number of Trump biographers have confirmed that Trump evaded the Vietnam draft, and he himself has admitted to the *Washington Post*, “I had a lot of deferments,” and he “always felt somewhat guilty” about avoiding service.

“Like many in his generation, he avoided serving in the Vietnam War by getting a bogus medical deferment, in his case for bone spurs, a condition widely considered permanent that somehow never interfered with his playing sports and apparently disappeared when he was no longer draft-eligible,” said another of his biographers, Gwenda Blair. “What makes Trump different is that rather than justifying this subterfuge by questioning the war’s legitimacy, he impugned the intelligence and bravery of those who did fight, calling them suckers and labelling one of the most famous veterans, John

McCain, a loser because he was captured and spent more than five years in a POW camp.”

But this has always been a family affair, Blair said. “Trump was only following in the footsteps of his own grandfather,” she said. “Many decades earlier, at the end of the nineteenth century, Friedrich Trump dodged mandatory military service in Germany by emigrating to the U.S. when he was too young to serve and returning to Germany just after he turned too old.”

For classmates like White, Trump’s reported remarks are simply an echo of that long family tradition.

“It’s real simple. His grandfather dodged the draft in Germany and his father never went in. And when I came back from Korea, in 1972, I ran into him in New York City and told him where I’d been, he didn’t give a flying ripshit that I’d been to Korea. He made barfing noises,” White said. “I said, ‘Holy shit, you are a piece of work.’”

Michael Hirsh is a senior correspondent at *Foreign Policy*. Twitter: [@michaelphirsh](https://twitter.com/michaelphirsh)

Dodging and deferring: Trump wasn't the only POTUS to avoid the draft

By [Lawrence J. Korb](#)

Jan 22, 2021

<https://www.militarytimes.com/opinion/commentary/2021/01/21/dodging-and-deferring-trump-wasnt-the-only-potus-to-avoid-the-draft/>



President Joe Biden and Vice President Kamala Harris arrive at the Tomb of the Unknown Soldier at Arlington National Cemetery during Inauguration Day ceremonies in Arlington, Va. Former President Barack Obama and his wife Michelle, former President George W. Bush and his wife Laura and former President Bill Clinton and his wife former Secretary of State Hillary Clinton and family look on. (Evan Vucci/AP)

It is quite appropriate and important that on the day of the inauguration, the new president, Joseph Biden, and three of his four immediate predecessors visited Arlington Cemetery where many of those who have made the ultimate sacrifice for this country are laid to rest.

In addition to honoring these brave men and women, I hope that President Biden and former presidents Bush and Clinton reflected on the fact that some who are buried at Arlington are there because they — like Trump — avoided being drafted in 1968. Therefore, someone who probably could not afford college, or have the background or connections, had to go into the Army.

Bill Clinton received educational deferments from 1963 to 1968 so that he could attend Georgetown, and after graduating, accept a Rhodes scholarship to attend Oxford. However, in 1968, when the law that allowed men to receive deferments even for graduate or law school was changed, Clinton received his draft notice. But, to avoid being drafted in 1968, Bill Clinton used his connections to get permission to join the ROTC at the University of Arkansas law school. This permitted him to avoid the draft and allowed him to return to Oxford to complete his master's. Moreover, in 1969 when he was returning from England, President Nixon instituted a draft lottery. When Clinton received a number that would have ensured that he would not be selected, he reneged on the commitment to join the ROTC with no penalty.

After graduating from Yale in 1968, President George W. Bush used his family connections to allow him to enlist in the Texas Air National Guard for a six-year stint as a pilot. He did this because it became clear that President Johnson would not activate the Guard to go to Vietnam but would rely instead on the active forces to fight that bloody conflict. Therefore, it became almost impossible to get into the Guard in 1968, especially for someone like Bush who had a low score (in the 25th percentile) on the pilot test, and also had an arrest record. Moreover, in Bush's last two years, his attendance at Guard meetings dropped off, he lost his pilot certification but, unlike most of these, he was not recalled to active duty.

Biden not only received deferments for his undergraduate days at the University of Delaware, but for three years of law school at Syracuse University. When his education deferments expired in 1968, Biden requested a deferment based on the fact he had asthma as a teenager. He did this in spite of the fact that, according to his own book, he was a star athlete in high school and in college played intramural sports and was a lifeguard in the summer.

By having someone else go to Vietnam instead of them, these three presidents were also able to use the two years that they would have had to spend in the military to begin the careers that launched them to the White House. Clinton parlayed his Rhodes scholarship into admission into Yale Law School, which is among the most competitive law schools in the country, running for Congress and becoming attorney general of Arkansas about seven years after he avoided service, something he could not have done had he had to divert his career by spending time in the military before attending law school.

During his time in the Guard, Bush not only did not deploy but missed several weekend drills while going to Harvard Business School and working on the campaigns of at least one senator.

As soon as he received his asthma deferment, Biden ran for local office and within two years after he would have been discharged from the Army, assuming he was not wounded or killed, he was elected to the Senate.

I wish that these three men had had parents like my dad. When I took my draft physical, I was told that I needed to get a waiver to go into the service because I had polio when I was 9 years old. My dad told me that we did not have deferments in our house and did I think because I was the first in my family to go to college that I was better than the paper boy (who tragically was killed in Vietnam)? Moreover, my younger brother was also drafted and sent to Vietnam a couple of years after me.

In one of the Democratic political debates, Congressman Seth Moulton, D-Mass., said something that I wish these three presidents would think about as they went to Arlington: "I'd like to meet that American hero who went to Vietnam in Donald Trump's place. I hope he is still alive."

Lawrence Korb a senior fellow at the Center for American Progress served as an assistant secretary of defense in the Reagan administration. He served four years on active duty as a naval flight officer and retired from the Navy Reserve with the rank of captain.

Editor's note: This is an Op-Ed and as such, the opinions expressed are those of the author. If you would like to respond, or have an editorial of your own you would like to submit, please contact Military Times managing editor Howard Altman, haltman@militarytimes.com.

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Military Service in Israel

RC Present Time, April 2013 pages 79 and 80

My name is Racheli. I am a young adult Israeli Jew living in the United States. I served in the Israeli military for two years as a medic on a small base close to Jenin (a Palestinian city in the Occupied Territories). In January 2012 I participated in an RC Veterans' and Allies' Workshop led by Julian Weissglass¹ and Jim Driscoll.² It was great!

My highlight was seeing Julian counsel R—, an Israeli combat veteran who had participated in war. I had never seen an Israeli man speak about his experience in the way that man did, and the love and tenderness Julian showed him was a huge contradiction³ for me.

I realized that although military experience is deeply entrenched in daily Israeli life, a big part of it is hidden and not spoken about. Secrecy and ambiguity surround what is actually happening to soldiers and what they are required to do. That may be the most effective way to conduct warfare, but even after soldiers are released they are not encouraged to tell their stories. They are left alone to bury their experience somewhere in the back of their mind.

In Israel, to be a soldier is considered normal, a regular and necessary part of life. Released LISA KAUFFMAN soldiers (we have no word for "veteran" in Hebrew) are expected to carry on with their lives without giving any attention to things they did, or things that were done to them, as soldiers.

Many Israelis feel conflicted about their military experience. During the workshop, I had a mixture of feelings that reflected the role that Israel plays as both an oppressor and an oppressed nation. I felt anger at myself and other Israelis for agreeing to participate in war. Simultaneously, I felt despair and pain because the anger was separating me from my people. I felt a need to forgive myself and other Israelis for occupying Palestine. It is hard to discharge on our responsibility as oppressors while keeping in mind our goodness. It's a tight place. I often feel bad about taking the oppressor role, but simultaneously I feel that I have no choice, that I am in this "soup" with all my people.

In Israel, soldiers in uniform carrying a weapon are everywhere—on trains, buses, and streets; in restaurants. Pictures of soldiers appear in advertisements. *Serving in the army is mandatory.* You have to go unless you have special circumstances—a physical or mental disability, certain religious beliefs or ethnicity (the Arab people in Israel are not required to serve). *It is against the law to refuse to join the army.* And depending on the circumstances, *young people go to jail if they try to get away or refuse.*

Going to the army is perceived like going to school—you just do it. It's a ticket into the Israeli society. It's normal. It's necessary. It's your duty to your country, family, and friends. Most likely other members of your family were part of the army. Since you were born, you were familiar with the idea of the army and that someday you would contribute to it as well.

In Israel almost everybody is, has been, or will be a soldier. This includes my family, friends, Co-Counselors, acquaintances, lovers, teachers, business partners, and random people I meet on the street. It feels like everybody is guilty and there is no way out. It's scary to question mandatory recruitment for the army—people will often attack you for even questioning.

Representatives of the army come to high schools and speak to the young people about the army. In my school, we were required to go through a week of mock military training, called *Gadna*.

I grew up on a kibbutz⁴ and studied with young people from other kibbutzim in the area, and everybody went to serve in combat units. In a school ten minutes away, where I went for drama classes, several young people were considering not joining. That school had young people from kibbutzim but also from the city. At the time, I saw those young people as *mishtamtin*: selfish and lazy people who "shake off" the responsibility of army service and refuse to participate in the "war efforts."

These days some young people figure out how to get out of service. Many go to a psychologist to get "diagnosed" as mentally unfit. So you basically have to be "crazy" to not want to go to the army. (Isn't that "crazy"?)

Some positions in the army pay okay, especially if people sign on for more than the mandatory period of service or if they are in the *Gdudim* (the sections of the army that handle ground combat) or the air force. But most soldiers hardly get paid, and they receive little or no financial help for schooling after their service.

Women in the Military

In Israel women are required to serve two years in the army. Women are essential for keeping the military going. They are teachers and trainers for soldiers' preliminary and specialized trainings. They teach shooting, driving, and the handling of ammunition and heavy machinery. They are army police officers, guards at checkpoints in the Occupied Territories, nurses, combat paramedics, combat pilots. They handle a lot of bureaucracy and administrative work. They work for information (*modi'in*). They are engineers, therapists, and more. They are everywhere! Some women also do *miluim*—after being released from mandatory service, they serve in a military position for a couple of weeks or more every year. Some women are required to do *miluim* until their thirties or forties or until they have a baby.

Many women are still not allowed to join the *Gdudim*. There is only one *Gdud* I know about, which defends the borders, in which both men and women serve together.

Although most women do not serve in the *Gdudim*, a lot of women in the military are subjected to violence or required to inflict it—for example, women who serve in the army police, the *Magav*. A lot of women must carry a weapon and practice using it. A lot are stationed on bases that are under attack by bullets or bombing. I feel that if it were not for sexism, many more women would decide to fight in order to be on the front line. I don't know the percentage of women who suffer rape or sexual harassment during their service, but it would be a good thing to look into.

Thank you, Jim and Julian, for doing this work for so many years. Thank you for having an Arab-Jewish panel on Shabbat.⁵ That was the contradiction of a lifetime!

Racheli Mendelson Boulder, Colorado, USA (born and raised in Israel)

Marginalisation of Parents by Society

Is the family a mechanism of social oppression?

Oppression is first introduced to humans through their primary socialisation within the family. The family is an institution in which it transmits the stereotypical gender roles, for example women performing the expressive role (being nurturing) and men performing the instrumental role (being the breadwinner). These gender roles are then taught to children through types of toys children are given when they are younger. For example, boys are typically given toy cars and train sets, which require building which could spark their interest in manual labour or engineering, two heavily male dominated job sectors, whereas girls are typically given dolls and teddy bears that they care for and look after. As a result, children being socialised in this environment, with the woman typically being the dependent housewife/mother figure and the father being the breadwinner; the children are being conditioned into roles that will keep women oppressed.

This oppression is reinforced to children in their secondary socialisation, through institutions such as schools and the media. For example, in schools there are subjects that are stereotypically exclusive to one gender, STEM subjects are most common among boys, whereas English and Languages are most common among girls. English and Languages are typically expressive subjects; therefore, these subject choices could be preparing girls for their expressive role within the family, therefore reinforcing the oppression by preparing girls to be dependent housewives and mothers.

The media reinforces female oppression, through advertising the “cereal packet” family, which consists of mum, dad and their dependent children. The media normalises the nuclear family as the sole family of, for example, the UK and the USA, with rarely any portrayal of families such as extended families or reconstructed families. Therefore, by advertising the “cereal packet” family, children are growing up to believe that the nuclear family, the Father (instrumental), the Mother (expressive) and their dependent children is the “correct” family, again reinforcing not only the oppression of women but also diversity in families.

However, the family doesn't have to be an institution that promotes oppression, so long as parents socialise their children in an environment that respects diversity (whether that's family types or people; sexual orientation, religion, race and ethnicity and so on) and teaches their children about the misrepresented groups, families and communities in our society, then their children can challenge the stereotypes that secondary socialisation attempts to reinforce, until enough people are educated on respecting and accepting diversity, that oppressive policies and ideologies will be revolutionised.

Written by Erin (Year 10)

Equity and anti-oppression in child welfare

Our society has a strong tendency to blame individuals and turn a blind eye to systemic issues in society. Nowhere is this more cruel, than in the area of state supervision of parents and parenting. (This cruelty is apparent, when we look at the quality of care provided to children in state care, so often the state ends up providing far worse “care” than the original parents might have, especially if they were given appropriate social supports instead of removing the children from their care.) Parents are often trapped between the state/society and the demands for caring for their children. Who of us wants to bring up our children as cannon fodder? But as parents we have very little agency or choice in this equation.

Supplementary readings relevant to topics and practice areas covered in the "Equity in Child Welfare" course

<https://oacas.libguides.com/equity-AOP/oppression>

Understanding oppression and privilege

In order to achieve equity and change practices to support positive outcomes for all children, youth, and families, it's important to understand what oppression is and how it plays out in the child welfare system.

Oppression refers to the use of power by one group to disempower, marginalize, or exert dominance over another group. Dominant groups can maintain their status, privilege, and power over others both intentionally and unintentionally as well as in obvious and subtle ways. Acts of oppression can become institutionalized or systemic, thus becoming hidden and seemingly 'normal'. They can also play out on the personal and interpersonal levels, influencing individual values, beliefs, and actions as well as interactions between people.

Oppression can take many forms. Types of oppression in Canadian society and impacting child welfare include but are not limited to ableism, anti-Semitism, classism, colonization, heterosexism, Islamophobia, racism, sexism, and transphobia. Because people have multiple intersecting sites of marginalized identities, they may have to deal with multiple forms of oppression. This is why oppression needs to be discussed alongside the concept of [intersectionality](#).

Just as there are many types of oppression, there are also many types of privilege, for example, white privilege, class privilege, and male privilege. Privilege refers to the unearned power and advantages that members of the dominant group receive as a direct result of the oppression and marginalization experienced by individuals who are not considered members of the dominant group. As such, privilege can be understood as the flip side of oppression, as explained in the video below:

Equity and anti-oppression in child welfare Privilege 101 video from Youtube

<https://youtu.be/FvIEVEW1Sp8>

Oppression in child welfare

The child welfare system continues to be implicated in the oppression experienced by marginalized groups in society, including African Canadians, immigrants and refugees, Indigenous people, LGBTQ2S+ people, low-income people, people with disabilities and mental health issues, racialized people, and single-mother families.

While the specific needs and issues faced by these marginalized groups vary, their shared experience of child welfare is 'marginal' in that it does not reflect the dominant or mainstream experience which is centred within the system (and in the larger social context) and embedded in the beliefs and biases held by child welfare professionals. The result is that service users who do not reflect or hold the same values and norms as the dominant group are defined as 'different' and those differences are perceived as 'inferior.'

For example, low-income families that provide a caring home for their children may still be substantiated for child maltreatment because the experience of poverty can often look like neglect to the eyes of someone from a middle-class upbringing. Loving LGBTQ2S+ families with diverse configurations that go beyond the nuclear family, include non-biological connections, and look different from heterosexual and cisgendered family structures may be seen as deviant or unstable. European worldviews of racial and cultural superiority have historically, and continue to be, responsible for the removal of Indigenous children from their communities and families.

Learning about oppression – specifically how certain groups are disadvantaged and disproportionately impacted by the child welfare system, and how workers, as representatives of the system, can unconsciously and sometimes consciously misuse their power and privilege when working with children, youth, and families – is therefore key to disrupting the marginalization of these groups and to integrating equity into practice and thinking.

Equity and Indigenous child welfare

While equity and anti-oppressive practice (AOP) in child welfare are concerned with providing equitable outcomes for all children, youth, and families, OACAS recognizes that not all Indigenous communities agree with or support equity and AOP frameworks, and that distinct approaches are required when working within an Indigenous context. This is because Indigenous peoples are not just seeking equity, but also additional unique rights as described in the statement below from the Ontario Human Rights Commission:


"It is important to note that Indigenous peoples understand themselves as peoples or nations, not as racial or ethnic groups. There are many consequences that flow from this distinction, including Indigenous peoples' rights to land and rights to self-determination, which includes rights to self-government. These rights have been recognized at the international level through the *United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples*. To respect these distinct entitlements, Indigenous peoples must be distinguished from other communities and recognized as unique. We encourage CASs, government and others to clearly recognize Indigenous peoples as distinct peoples and nations when considering data collection and other aspects of service delivery."

-From the 2018 report [Interrupted childhoods: Over-representation of Indigenous and Black children in Ontario child welfare](#).

Resources

- [Understanding oppression and "isms" as a system](#)
- [Kike Ojo, Program Manager for One Vision One Voice, reflects on the Anti-Oppression Round Table's 10th anniversary](#)



- [Forms of privilege](#)
- 
- [Why it's important to think about privilege - and why it's hard](#)
- [White people assume niceness is the answer to racial inequality. It's not](#)

No place like home?

<http://pubs.socialistreviewindex.org.uk/sr192/german.htm>

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Will strengthening the family solve lots of the problems of society? That is the argument put by the Tories and even some former feminists who, *Lindsey German* argues, would have once seen the family as a source of oppression

Perhaps one of the most surprising political reversals of the 1990s has been the way in which the liberal middle classes have rediscovered the family. Despite overwhelming evidence to the contrary--a rising divorce rate, fewer people marrying in the first place, more and more children born out of wedlock--we are increasingly told that the family is the bedrock of society which has to be bolstered at any cost.



Fighting to get out of the home in the 1960s

Defence of the family has always been high on the right wing agenda. From Adolf Hitler with his slogan of 'Children, church and kitchen' which summed up the role of women in Nazi Germany, right through to Republican Newt Gingrich in the US today, the family has been seen as one of the major units of stability inside capitalist society. Without stable families, it is argued, all manner of moral and social ills ensue. There is more crime, violence, truancy, disrespect for authority.

Such arguments, however, have tended to be the prerogative of a fairly narrow right wing. Lady Olga Maitland, for example, has always represented the neanderthal wing of the Tory Party. Today she has been joined in her defence of the family by a much wider range of people. Tony Blair, almost immediately after being elected as leader of the Labour Party, declared his belief that 'it is best that kids are brought up in a normal, stable family.' Earlier this year he told the Labour Women's Conference that 'Labour is the party of the family in Britain.'

Melanie Phillips argues in a television film, *Who Killed the Family?* and in the *Observer* that the family is being destroyed by 'libertarianism', and that the liberalisation of divorce law, for example, has helped to destroy the family.

There are many who do not agree with Phillips, but such is the moral climate over the family that they are pulled towards defending it while accepting some of the right wing's terms. So feminist Anna Coote argues that single parents, gays or divorcees should not be scapegoated, but then accepts many of the assumptions about the family. She says:

'Women must have the opportunity to be dependable, to be strong and self reliant, able to care and provide, and to hold things together when the going gets tough... But children need their father too--as much for emotional sustenance as for paying the bills... If

families are to be strengthened, we need to redefine the roles and responsibilities of men and women.'

She concludes that we need 'the kind of pro-family agenda that could provide a government... with a strong moral leadership'.

All this is a very far cry from the ideas on the family held by those in the women's liberation movement at its inception in the late 1960s. Then it was assumed that the family was one of the main centres of women's oppression. Women could give birth to and bring up children without living with men, and their role in life had to go well beyond the confines of their own four walls if they were to gain real fulfilment. For example, the following was written in 1971 in a collection of women's writings called *Liberation Now!*:

'We are not "creating" the dissolution of the American family, we are merely analysing and reacting to what has already gone on for some time. Today one out of every three marriages ends in divorce, and children are leaving home at earlier and earlier ages. It is clear that the family is simply not answering our needs... We are not against love, against men and women living together, against having children. What we are against is the role women play once they become wives and mothers.'

Around the same time Linda Gordon wrote an article, 'Functions of the Family', which included such observations as, 'Families have enforced responsibility for children by making private property of them', and, 'Families have helped to stifle even the dream of liberation by conditioning people into roles and then defining these roles as "fulfillment".'

The early women's movement and socialist writing from the time combined a view of the family as something which existed at least partly for the good of the system itself, with the idea that all was not well within the family. The unpaid labour of women--and to a lesser extent men--within the home enabled the cost of bringing up a new generation of workers to be placed on the shoulders of individuals.

The contradictions inside the family, however, mean that it cannot fulfil the expectations of its individual members for much of the time. The household is seen as the repository of love, calm, respite from a cruel world. Its reality is rather different. The family contains within it personal and sexual tensions, some of which spill over into violence. The majority of murders, for example, take place in and around the family. Children are more at risk of abuse within the family than they are from strangers.



Economic pressures too find their sharpest focus within the family. People work for too many hours for too little money. The strain that this causes leads to argument, battering, divorce, adolescents leaving home. The contrast between the dream homes and ideal family lives of television advertising and the reality of cramped physical conditions

and the constant exhaustion of shift working creates further pressures which some families simply cannot stand.

The validity of this analysis has not been diminished over the past 25 years. Rather the rise of unemployment and poverty, the increase in women working, the pressure of cuts in social services and healthcare have all put more strain on the family and made it less like the ideal.

Yet there is a growing unwillingness from the people who acquiesce in the way our society is run to accept that they are in any way at fault. Instead they blame family breakdown on increased 'selfishness' or people 'wanting to have their cake and eat it'. It is noticeable that these 'selfish attitudes' seem to be predominant among working people and the poor. Greater promiscuity on the part of rich right wing Tories like Alan Clarke does not seem to upset the new moralists. Nor does the life of idleness provided by the state enjoyed by the single parent Princess Diana. The 'second families' of MPs or businessmen cause little concern.

Outrage is reserved for the single parents living on council estates, those who have the temerity to want to divorce as easily as they marry, and those who refuse to stay in an unhappy relationship 'for the sake of the children'. There are two elements involved in the double standards of the pro-family liberals. One is the old view that sexual choice and freedom are fine for those with the time and the money, but not for the rest of us. The second is, why should money be spent on benefits for the poor and undeserving?

Those who call for a reduction in benefits for the poor themselves receive substantial subsidies in the form of tax relief on company cars, private pensions, mortgages and private schools--as well as salaries beyond the dreams of most ordinary workers.

Campaigns such as the recent one against the Divorce Bill attempt to impose a certain sort of morality on ordinary people's lives. Those who do so believe that they have the right to tell the rest of us what to do in our leisure time as well as at work. Yet they have no real comprehension of what causes the crisis in the family and so no idea of how it can be solved. The increase in divorce, single parenthood and increasingly independent attitudes among women can be traced to fundamental changes in women's lives. Women going out to work for longer and longer portions of their lives has gone hand in hand with much greater access to education and a desire in all the advanced capitalist countries for women to control and limit the number of children that they have.

In such a situation most women will no longer tolerate complete subservience to men; nor will they be willing to remain in unhappy relationships if they have an alternative. The rate of divorce has been rising since the Second World War. It rose sharply after the Divorce Act of 1969, but this was largely through people obtaining divorces who had wanted them for many years but could not get agreement from their partners. As a result the rate per thousand married people rose from 2.1 in 1961 to 6.0 in 1971.

There is evidence of a connection between women going out to work and a rise in divorce rates, as shown for example by Roderick Phillips in his book *Putting Asunder*. It also makes sense if we look at the history of the family under capitalism. During the period of the industrial

revolution and its immediate aftermath, there was an almost complete breakdown of the family among large sections of the working class.

Driven off the land and pauperised, or forced to live and work in the slums of the big industrial cities, women and men often found the family impossible to keep together. By the beginning of the 19th century, most agricultural labourers in the south of England were on some sort of poor relief because their wages were too low. Cooking became virtually impossible for many of them because fuel was hard to obtain, and their diet consisted of bread, cheese and tea.

Workers were able to obtain a higher living standard by working in the big factories and textile mills, but only because in many cases all members of the family were forced to work (even tiny children). The family then was completely different from the old agricultural one: women had much more freedom; they paid other women to cook, clean and care for their children, and there was much more likelihood of traditional relationships breaking down.

This imposing of discipline on the working class family in the 19th century was one of the successes for the capitalist class in getting a more generally acquiescent working class to exploit. It ensured that women were seen as homemakers (even though they often had to work as well) for generations to come.

The changes in women's lives over the past 50 years and more have challenged the old attitudes to women and the family and given women a freedom--however limited--which their ancestors never knew.

This freedom is now under attack from the hardline right but also from erstwhile feminists. Attacks on divorce and single parents are all about putting women back into their 'rightful place'--and defending an institution which contains all the problems of the society which has moulded it.

By Alice Home, MSW, PhD, School of Social Work, University of Ottawa, Canada

<https://ojs.uwindsor.ca/index.php/csw/article/view/5652/4620>

Abstract

There is growing recognition that people with disabilities face oppression in a society which marginalizes those who are different; however, there is evidence that families living with disability also face exclusion, inadequate services and stigmatizing attitudes. Existing research uses gender-neutral terms, which obscure women's primary role in care giving and hide the high costs they bear. This paper examines the hidden, gender-based oppression experienced by mothers caring for children with disabilities. Relevant literature is reviewed critically to analyse difficulties these women encounter and supports they use. Examples are drawn from three exploratory studies of role quality and supports, reported by mothers caring for children with disabilities.

Challenging Hidden Oppression

There is growing recognition that people with disabilities face oppression in a society which marginalizes and devalues those who are different. Disabled people, who make up 16% of the Canadian population, have higher levels of unemployment and lower levels of education, often leading to poverty and social exclusion (Hanes, 2001). Those who are members of other marginalised groups face complex, interacting oppressions.

While disability research centres and optional courses attest to increasing social work interest, surprisingly few courses focus on disability in contrast to the number dealing with other oppressions related to gender, race or culture and aging (Stanton & Swift, 1996).

A major impetus for treating disability as oppression has come from the consumer-led Disability Rights Movement. Progress has been made in legal protection; however, considerable ambivalence persists regarding the acceptance of people with disabilities, who continue to be stigmatised and stereotyped (Hanes, 2001). That ambivalence persists is evident in the continuing presence of a medical model, which treats disability as a personal tragedy, requiring professional assistance focussed on the individual. In contrast, the emerging social oppression model views disability as resulting not only from functional impairment, but also from social, political and economic inequality (Hanes, 2001, Thompson, 1997). As in feminist theory and practice, the latter model attempts to focus on social barriers, such as stigmatising attitudes and inadequate support, without denying the personal experience of oppression experienced by people with disabilities (Sheldon, 1999; Sloper, 1999). While this increasing scholarly interest is welcome, its primary focus on disabled individuals obscures the reality that families also live with disability. There is considerable evidence that families with a disabled child also face stigmatising attitudes and inadequate services, as well as exclusion from informal social networks

(Seligman & Darling, 1997, Gartner, Lipsky & Turnbull, 1991). Those studies that do examine family impact focus more on child or family characteristics than on community attitudes and supports. In addition, this literature often uses gender-neutral terms, which hide women's primary role in caring for family members with disabilities (Baines, Evans & Neysmith, 1991).

This paper examines the hidden oppression experienced by mothers caring for children with disabilities. In this article, oppression refers to denial of a group's right to full participation in society, through undervaluing the group and limiting its access to power and resources. Relevant literature will be examined critically, to highlight the changing context and hidden costs of women's caring. Feminist and ecological frameworks will be used to analyse both the gendered nature of caring and the impact of social factors on mothers' experience. The focus will be on the rewards and challenges of mothering (maternal role quality), and on factors which can influence them. Illustrative quotes and examples will be drawn from two exploratory studies of mothers who care for children with disabilities, along with preliminary observations from a study in progress. Similarities and differences in mothers' experiences will be discussed in the light of existing literature, with a view to drawing implications for anti-oppressive theory, practice and research.

The Changing Context of Women's Caring

Traditionally, women have been attributed primary responsibility for family work in most societies. In spite of massive economic and social changes which have profoundly affected women's roles in western countries, women continue to be ascribed the primary caring role and still carry the bulk of family work (Vanier Institute, 1998, Napholz, 1995). Women's massive entry into the work force, combined with diversification of families, means less than 15% of (US) households comprise a breadwinning husband and homemaking wife (Gerson, 1998). However, economic, work and community arrangements are still based on assumptions of the "traditional" family and the separation of work and family spheres (Cancian & Oliker, 1998). This has meant that women's unpaid family work remains undervalued and invisible, while the high economic, social and psychological costs borne by women go unrecognized.

Not only has women's work increased because of their double workday, but women's caring burden has expanded in recent years. Public responsibility for vulnerable and disabled individuals has been largely replaced by community and family care, the latter justified by "natural" explanations of women's caring (Baines, Evans & Neysmith 1991; Gerson 1998). This increased work has not been matched by marked changes in community policies and resources (Cancian & Oliker, 1998). Family and community care has translated into more unpaid work for women, who are increasingly called upon to take on added responsibility for ill and disabled family

members. The intensity and complexity of women's caring has grown as well, especially emotional and executive components, comprised of identifying family needs, planning, scheduling and following up, seeking appropriate resources and advocating when needs are not met (Lee, 1998, Devault, 1999).

One reason is that family division of labour has changed little. In families with average children, mothers usually assume ultimate responsibility for parenting and family management, while fathers "help out", even when mothers are employed (Leslie, Anderson & Branson, 1991). When disabilities are present, research shows that mothers reduce workplace commitments, while fathers tend to withdraw from family work to invest more in their jobs (Martin, 1996), such that their direct and indirect child care involvement is lower than in families without disabilities, according to some researchers (Bristol, Gallagher & Schopler, 1988). Fathers' withdrawal increases mothers' burden (Harvey, 1998), yet the indirect costs to women (loss of earnings and reduced options) go unrecognised (Meyers, Lukemeyer & Smeeding, 1998).

Inequitable family division of labour, however, is only one reason these women (along with single mothers) have the most difficulty balancing family and outside commitments (Descarries & Corbeil, 1998). Community provisions, designed for traditional families, do not begin to meet the flexibility needs of these mothers (Greenspan, 1998). The prolific literature on women's multiple roles has focused on women caring for elders or non-disabled children (Stephens & Townsend, 1994).

While this body of research has identified obstacles to work-family balance, (Duxbury, Higgins & Lee 1994, Home 1997a) it has virtually ignored mothers in atypical family situations, who are “mothering at the margins” (Garcia Coll, Surrey & Weingarten, 1998).

The few studies of mothers caring for children with disabilities found these women make considerable personal sacrifices in response to the intense family demands they face. Given the need for frequent workday involvement, coupled with lack of adapted child care, many women give in to societal pressure and return to a traditional homemaking role (Willoughby & Glidden, 1995; Marcenko & Meyers, 1985). Recent expanded opportunities for women in the public arena are fragile, as society’s tolerance of women’s involvement in employment decreases once demands for mothers’ family work intensify. (Trausadottir, 1991). Recent studies suggest that some women give up leisure time instead of cutting back on work (Jenkins, 1997), while others find ways to fit work commitments around their heavy caring burden, by reducing their hours, working altered schedules, passing up promotions or working part-time (Roeher Institute 2000; Shearn & Todd 2000, Trute, 1995). These women may feel obligated to help cover the vastly increased costs of providing for a special needs child, but they encounter “disabling barriers to effective and fulfilling management of both roles” (Kagan et al, 1999). These obstacles include lack of adapted child care, often needed for longer than in most families, lack of workplace

understanding of their intense family needs, inadequate flexibility for dealing with crises and societal ambivalence regarding these mothers' right to work. Underlying this ambivalence is implicit expectation that these women's maternal roles can be mobilized at any time, which is at odds with norms in a production-oriented society that the job must come first (Kagan et al, 1999; Roeher Institute, 2000; Shearn & Todd, 2000). Thus, these mothers are facing oppression as women in a male-dominated society as well as that which accompanies family disability in an ableist world. Many women respond by making whatever individual adaptations they can while bearing the costs in silence.

Maternal Role Quality: Rewards, Challenges and Supports

An important line of multiple role research has explored women's subjective experience (role quality) in their work and family roles. Studies of **parental role quality** (rewards and challenges of parenting) are of particular interest, as women whose parental concerns outweigh their rewards have high distress (Barnett et al, 1994). However, the extensive work done by Barnett (1994) and her colleagues is based on research in families facing average parental demands, often with adequate resources. This means that instruments used to measure perceived rewards and concerns do not reflect the experiences of mothers whose children have disabilities. Furthermore, this research tends to ignore social and environmental factors, such as

income and community supports, which can play a critical role in these mothers' experience.

The family disability literature is helpful, as it makes these families' needs more visible. It points out that families with special needs carry a heavy burden due to unpredictable, persistent demands which increase family work while decreasing leisure and employment options (Greenspan 1998, Repetti & Wood, 1997, Seligman & Darling, 1997). This situation is exacerbated by stigmatising attitudes, which lead to social exclusion of both children and their families from community activities and mainstream resources (Gartner et al, 1991). When lack of informal community support is combined with inadequate services, isolation often results. It is precisely this lack of societal acceptance and absence of adapted resources that can transform impairment into disability, according to the social model (Thompson, 1997).

However, this literature has several weaknesses. It usually uses terms such as parent, family and caregiver, which hide the role of gender in these women's oppression. Furthermore, the dominant influence of medical models is evident in its emphasis on negative aspects of caring for children with disabilities, with little consideration of any rewards or learning . Finally, this body of research focuses on the impact of child and family characteristics, giving short shrift to environmental factors such as income, resources and supports, so important in social work.

Most studies of family impact focus on **child factors**, such as severity of impairment and type of disability. Although severity can increase family work and influence mothers' decisions to reduce workplace involvement (Canning, Harris & Kelleher, 1996, McDonald, Poertner & Pierpont, 1998), environmental factors, such as type of employment and availability of appropriate childcare, can affect women's decisions (Jenkins, 1997). In addition, severity of impairment per se appears to have less impact on mother's experience than does the presence of aggressive, defiant or destructive behaviour (Floyd & Gallagher, 1998),. Furthermore, children with unpredictable, periodic behaviour problems at times appear "normal", as their disabilities are invisible. These children with their families have an ambiguous status, which impedes their acceptance in both the mainstream and disabled communities (Fewell, 1990). When behaviour problems do occur, both mother and child are blamed , due to public misunderstanding about these disabilities.

Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD) is a case in point, as it usually involves behaviour and social problems which can alienate teachers and peers (Harvey 1998, Dane 1990), yet it is poorly understood by both the public and many professionals. Misleading media representations of ADHD has led to the public to question whether it really is a disability, despite clear evidence of its biological origin and its enormous impact on children and their families (Bernier & Siegel, 1994).. This public debate has even penetrated some scholarly circles (see Lloyd & Norris, 1999),

displacing emphasis away from consumer priorities such as community and professional support. This obliges mothers to educate scholars, professionals and a doubting public, in addition to coping with a difficult child, fighting for needed resources and resisting the personal impact of constant community blame (Sloman & Konstantareas, 1990).

While relatively few studies examine **family or environmental factors**, (Boyce et al, 1995), there is evidence that stress increases when adverse conditions accumulate (Meyers, Lukemeyers & Smeeding, 1998). All families whose children have disabilities face vastly increased costs, as many needed services (such as assessment, treatment, equipment) are either not covered or strictly rationed under public health policies (Sloper, 1999). Inadequate income is a major source of anxiety (Sloper, 1999; Canning et al, 1996), as it restricts access to scarce resources, especially for increasing numbers of mothers in precarious employment situations, which offer no extra health benefits (Krauskopf & Akabas, 1998). Families with more than one exceptional child face increased material hardship and housing instability (Meyers et al, 1998). The higher stress reported by single mothers disappears once age, education and income are controlled, suggesting that their added difficulties are primarily due to economic inequality (Boyce et al, 1995). Risk of mental health problems increase in families living with ADHD, however, when low income is combined with other adverse conditions such as large family size (Biedermen et al, 1995).

Even when resources are available and accessible, they are rarely adequate to meet the child's and mother's needs. Unsatisfactory relationships with schools and professionals are a major source of stress, especially when children have behaviour or emotional problems (McDonald, Couchonnal & Early, 1996, Bernier et al, 1994). For example, parents of children with ADHD perceive clinical social workers as blaming rather than helping them (Johnson et al, 2000). This may reflect societal expectations that mothers should be able to cope with impossible family situations and offered services only when they fail (Davies and Krane, 1996) .It is small wonder many mothers turn to peer-led self-help groups, especially when trying to cope with the community rejection that behaviour problems bring (Floyd & Gallagher, 1997). One study found parents of children with ADHD perceived these groups as very helpful (Viola, 1997), perhaps because they empower members, by increasing their sense of parenting competence, self-efficacy, knowledge and systems advocacy (Singh et al, 1997). A sense of parenting being rewarding can also help (Yau & Li-Tsang, 1999), but many mothers are too overwhelmed by their intense responsibilities and the low community acceptance to feel much satisfaction.

Mothers Speak Out: Some Examples from Research

Given the lack of research on role quality and support, several exploratory studies were undertaken. The two completed studies include a survey of 25 parents who have adopted special needs children (Audet & Home, in press), and a small study of Franco-

Ontarian mothers of developmentally delayed adolescents, recruited through the schools (Fauteux, 2001). The latter used semi-structured interviews to collect data on rewards and challenges of mothering these children, as well as on helpful and needed supports. The data on adoptive parents is derived from two open-ended questions that were included in a survey, distributed to members of the Adoption Council of Canada (Audet & Home, in press). It is interesting to note that while 23 adoptive mothers responded, only 11 fathers participated in this section on rewards and challenges, designed to be completed by both parents. A third study, still in progress, uses semi-structured interviews to explore the same questions as in Fauteux's (2001) research, but with 39 employed mothers of children with ADHD.

Contrary to the medical model of disability, mothers in these studies did reap some rewards from parenting these special children, though these rewards differed from those found in average families. Mothers of children with physical and intellectual disabilities admired special qualities in their children, such as courage, resilience, polite and honest behaviour, which set them apart from many average children (Audet and Home, in press, Fauteux, 2001). Regardless of type of disability, however, rewards were less obvious to mothers when behaviour problems were present. Personal growth was a major reward, though it came from hard work. Mothers described being "stretched through parenting" (Audet & Home, in press), which involved learning new skills, such as advocacy, out of necessity. As one mother said, "I had to learn many

things, such as how to push to get my child's needs met", while another was forced to go to the Human Rights Commission to obtain adapted transportation services that had been denied to her child (Fauteux, 2001). As in Traustadottir's (1991) study, these women found strengths they didn't know they had. However, these were rewards that came only after their persistent struggle to protect their children from injustice.

Taking pride in small accomplishments that "normal" children do easily was an important but difficult part of finding those rewards, as neighbours and extended family did not see "how far the kids have come — they focus on how far they have to go" (Audet & Home, in press). The community inability to see these children's "able" side meant many mothers had to work hard to keep their children's problems in perspective, to keep focussed on the positives and to maintain their parental self-esteem (Audet & Home, in press). Keeping a positive self-image is doubly challenging when children are defiant, immature or exhibit inappropriate or antisocial behaviour. Not only did some mothers have "a great deal of trouble liking him most of the time", but they also felt inadequate because the usual child-raising methods just didn't work. However, they were reluctant to seek help, due to "fear they (family, professionals) will not understand. There is also this desire to 'manage on one's own'" (Audet & Home, in press). Their concerns are justified, as social workers can interpret admission of coping difficulties as a sign of inadequate mothering (Davies & Krane, 1996).

Participating mothers confirmed that their children's disabilities required patience with the slow pace of change, along with huge investments of time. Mothers gave up personal time, were too exhausted to pursue leisure or social activities and found all their decisions were based first and foremost on their children's special needs. Several mothers of developmentally delayed teens reduced their work hours, as they could not conciliate numerous medical appointments with rigid work hours, nor could they obtain adapted after school or holiday care (Fauteux, 2001). Societal expectations regarding age-appropriate autonomy have impeded provision of appropriate service for teens with disabilities, who continue to need some supervision and structure. While these mothers felt disadvantaged, they saw no alternative, given workplace inflexibility and inadequate community services (Krauskopf & Akabus, 1998).

Mothers in these studies indicated that dealing with the disability per se was not the greatest problem. Consistent with the social model of disability, it was lack of support from family, community and professionals that was most challenging for many women (Audet & Home, in press). For example, mothers of children with ADHD indicated that their burden was eased when extended family accepted the child, offering emotional and tangible help. However, informal support was rarely available either to these mothers or to those caring for developmentally delayed teens (Fauteux, 2001). While this was sometimes due to geographical distance, it often reflected discomfort with these different children. Both mothers and children were excluded from informal

get together and organised community activities, perhaps because society does not want to “see” families with a disabled child (Greenspan, 1998). Some mothers turned to others in the same situation for understanding and support, but this can result in a ghetto mentality, unless other social networks are accessible.

Public reactions to these mothers and children were usually negative, while varying with type and visibility of the disability. One mother of a developmentally delayed teen said she was stared at and felt judged, because her child wasn’t “100% like the others” and his difference was interpreted as deficiency. Adoptive mothers of special needs children wanted to be treated as just as parent, rather than as saints or martyrs (Audet & Home, in press). Mothers of children with ADHD received unsolicited advice from strangers, who thought the inappropriate public behaviour of these normal-appearing children reflected inadequate mothering. Finally, neighbourhood children were often uncaring or cruel, refusing to be friends with these children or with those who were developmentally delayed. Seeing their children excluded was the most painful part for some women, such as two mothers whose ADHD children waited in vain for “friends” who never showed up for their birthday parties.

The dearth of informal help made formal support even more important for mothers who participated in these studies. They found that existing services were not always affordable, accessible and appropriate to the particular needs of their children. Special classes were greatly appreciated by mothers who had adolescents with developmental

delays or whose children with ADHD had access to them. However, recent cuts to special education meant schools had little time for the ongoing communication or monitoring needed to ensure identified individual educational needs were met.

Mothers of children with ADHD were often told their child's disability was not severe enough to merit special help, yet many schools often misinterpreted the behaviour and academic problems this disorder brings as signs of poor parenting, bad character or laziness. Needing to maintain vigilance, while advocating constantly and "educating" teachers added to the burden these mothers bore (Anthony & Foster, 1999).

Some services were available only to those in extreme need, perhaps because these supports were deemed unnecessary in a society ambivalent about inclusiveness. For example, 75% of the adoptive mothers were unable to obtain needed respite and adapted child care (Audet & Home, in press). Access to financial support was restricted and the amounts were inadequate to cover real costs. Some supports were available only for certain types of disabilities. Adapted transport was denied to developmentally delayed adolescents, without consideration of the difficulty they would have in negotiating their way around a complex public transit system (Fauteux, 2001). Finally, mothers of children with ADHD spoke of the ambiguous status of families living with invisible disabilities. Consistent with Fewell's (1990) observations, some of these mothers had to cope with rejection from both the "normal and disabled communities. One mother, whose child's severe ADHD required a

special class placement, sought his admission to a programme for disabled skiers. The initial response was “we can’t just open the floodgate to anyone who THINKS he’s disabled”. When the mother approached the mainstream ski school, she was told it might not be appropriate. It took the intervention of an instructor for the disabled, who had given the boy a private lesson and who was himself the father of a visually disabled child, to gain admittance to the adapted programme. As found in Anthony & Foster’s (2001) focus group study of parents of children with ADHD, the burden was eased when someone understood how difficult this family’s life was and made an effort to collaborate with the parents.

Conclusion and Implications

Findings from these recent exploratory studies illustrate some complexities of the oppression experienced by mothers of children with disabilities. As suggested in some writings, these mothers felt obliged to make personal, economic and career sacrifices in the face of societal rejection and lack of support. However, their gender-based oppression often seemed hidden even from themselves, perhaps because the impact of disability is minimised by families “if it only limits the mother” (Traustadottir, 1991, 223). In addition, professionals and the community may still be taking mothers’ constant availability for granted, while holding them responsible for conditions they cannot control. Helping these mothers feel competent and giving them real options will require profound changes in attitudes, policies and resources.

Community education is needed, to ensure inclusiveness policies are enforced consistently across all disabilities and to promote tolerance of difference. Examination of existing policies is another necessary step, to analyse their benefits for different disability groups and to identify the role conservative ideologies play in restricting access to needed resources. Professional education needs to include obligatory content on disability and its impact on families, taking into account the complex ways it interacts with other oppressions. Finally, further research needs to be done to make these mothers' hidden oppression more visible, including action-research designed to promote social change. However, it is clear that this is a complex issue, because of public ambivalence and governmental priorities related to control of public spending. Social workers need to join mothers in their struggle to move this issue higher on the public agenda.

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Blaming Parents of Color for Their Own Oppression Is an American Pastime

By Stephanie A. Fryberg & Megan Bang — June 29, 2018 6 min read

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Although the separation of children from their families at the United States borders has supposedly stopped, the indefinite incarceration of immigrant families is no more humane or morally acceptable. The Trump administration continues to justify their policies by criminalizing parents and guardians, many of whom are seeking asylum or are simply looking for a better life for their children. [More than 2,000 children are still separated from their families](#) and will need help beyond reunification. The separation of children from their families is traumatizing and creates long-term harm.

Unfortunately, these sorts of policies and actions are not new, and do not represent an outlier in the moral fabric of the United States. This country has a long history of both removing nonwhite children from their families and incarcerating families of color who are positioned as a threat to the United States. For hundreds of years in the United States, black children were stripped from their parent's arms and auctioned off as slaves. The incarceration of Japanese-American families during the second world war in "internment" camps is another well-known and devastating example of such policies. And for generations, the United States government targeted Native American communities with child-separation policies to force compliance and assimilation.

Why do these kinds of policies and actions continue to arise in our country, and what sort of ideas enable them? While racist, white supremacist, anti-immigrant ideologies are certainly at play, one overarching concept is a pattern of blaming parents and caregivers to justify the systemic inequities and inhumane treatment of nonwhite and poor families. In the extreme cases, like those we have seen under the current administration, parent and caregiver blaming can be used to justify the removal of children. The Trump administration has criminalized parents and caregivers, removed their children, and allowed some Americans to [profit from this profound injustice](#). In more subtle forms, parent-blaming narratives are used to prop up policies intended to compel nonwhite or poor families to adopt mainstream, white values and norms. These narratives suggest that poor outcomes for children of color are the fault of poor child-rearing, not of inequitable systems."

Until the 1940s, the U.S. government forcibly removed generations of Native American children from their families and communities and placed them in boarding schools in assimilationist efforts to, "Kill the Indian, save the man." When the boarding school era began in the second half of the 19th century, the so-called "Indian problem" was two-fold: Native Americans were not assimilating into U.S. culture, and they had land and resources Americans wanted. Children were taken great distances from their parents, severely physically, emotionally, and sexually abused, often as punishment for speaking their tribal language or for practicing their tribal culture. The policy justification for Native children's removal often involved claims that parents were not properly educating their children, and thus it was settlers' moral and ethical responsibility to do so.

These early forms of child removal, originally legally sanctioned and justified, were eventually recognized as inhumane. Unfortunately, they were replaced by other forms of child removal with similar effects. Following the boarding school era, child protective services routinely removed Native children and placed them with white families. Prior to the 1978 passage of the Indian Child Welfare Act to stop this mass removal of Native children from their communities, up to 1 in 3 Native children were separated from their families nationwide. The majority of these children were removed for no more reason than that their family was poor or did not utilize traditionally white, middle-class child-rearing practices. Unfortunately, across the country, child protective services continue to disproportionately take children from families of color and low-income families into foster care for many of the same reasons.

The removal of children from their families is a traumatizing event for children and their caregivers and causes trauma that is passed on for generations. For example, work by researchers Amy Bombay, Kimberly Matheson, and Hymie Anisman demonstrates that Native children whose parents were forcibly removed and placed in boarding schools show psychological and physiological outcomes similar to those of the parents who directly experienced familial separations. The consequences of child-separation policies continue to impede the health and well-being of Native families and communities, including Native children's educational achievement. Similar psychological and physiological outcomes are pervasive in African-American communities as well.

Beyond justifying family-separation policies, parent-blaming narratives are applied to families routinely across many American institutions. In education, policy directives, and educational institutions, practitioners often blame parents and caregivers for all kinds of disparate outcomes, including student attendance, behavior, suspension, and academic underperformance. At their core, these narratives suggest that disparate outcomes for children of color are the fault of poor

child-rearing, not of inequitable systems. Often these narratives are used to coerce families to comply with the white, middle-class cultural models privileged in public schools.

In educational contexts, such narratives are often masked in “deficit models” of families of color and low-income families that position caregivers and their home lives as the source of educational disparities. For example, programs aimed at teaching parenting skills to poor parents and parents of color have proliferated across the country. These programs often claim that poor families and families of color don’t talk to, play with, or stimulate their children in the right ways and thus should be taught. These efforts persist despite research demonstrating cross-cultural variability in healthy child development.

Educational practices and policies rooted in these parent-blaming and family-deficit models aim to manipulate students and families into compliance—to assimilate and adopt mainstream cultural values or pay the consequences. However, such efforts largely fail to produce the espoused outcomes and instead, at best, prevent students of color from identifying with school, while perpetuating their families’ distrust of educational systems. At worst, these narratives create fertile ground for extreme policies like family separation.

In order to stop these destructive narratives, we must fulfill our moral responsibility to stop the ongoing crisis for the hundreds of immigrant children who remain separated from their families. We must also refuse family-deficit models as the foundations for our theories of action for educational change—or for any forms of policy. The recent call to action on both sides of the political aisle has proven that there is a limit to what society is willing to accept with respect to separating children from their parents. Let us hope that we will also refuse family incarceration as a viable policy.

When our legal systems violate basic human decency, they highlight the ways in which the seeds of these policies are sprinkled throughout our legal and social systems. Healthy communities—and, by extension, nations—rest on healthy families. There is no formula for a healthy family; they can be small or extended, a single parent head of household, two moms, two dads, three co-parents, or multi-generational, among many other possibilities. How our systems see and support families to thrive matters for who we are and what we can become as a nation.

Estranged When feeling good about ourselves matters more than filial duty cutting off our parents as a valid choice



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3,700 words

‘We haven’t heard from our son in five years. We thought, with the pandemic and all, that he’d finally reach out with just a “Hey, wanted to make sure you’re doing okay. Let me know.” But nothing. He hasn’t answered our emails checking to see how he or our grandkids are either. We just don’t understand.’

Parents of a 27-year-old

A family member’s reaction to the pandemic shines a light on the painful reality that some adult children want little or nothing to do with their parents. Reacting to the phenomenon of parental estrangement, I wrote my first [book](#) on the topic, *When Parents Hurt* (2007). Since then, I’ve worked with thousands of estranged parents in and outside the United States through therapy, in webinars, and in my survey of 1,600 respondents conducted with the University of Wisconsin Survey Center, forming the basis of my latest [book](#), *Rules of Estrangement*:

Why Adult Children Cut Ties and How to Heal the Conflict (forthcoming, 2021).

As the sociologist Joseph E Davis at the University of Virginia explained to me in an email: ‘Blaming parents for emotional abuse or dysfunction misses the complex social predicament in which both they and their parents are embedded.’

Parental estrangement is a topic that evokes strong opinions and emotions. It invites people to reflect on their family experiences, to review whether they treated their own parents fairly; and to consider whether they failed their children or deserve their distance or contempt. A common perception is that parents become estranged only if they’ve behaved in an egregious fashion when raising their children or in the years since. Indeed, there are plenty who behave in ways that make estrangement seem like a reasonable if not a necessary solution for their grown children: parents who abused their children or neglected them; who vilify them for their gender identities or sexualities; who continue to degrade them for their religious or political beliefs.

Yet others become estranged for reasons that would mystify those in prior generations. For example, an adult child who wants to go ‘no contact’ to work on ‘co-dependency issues’ that they believe stem from the parent’s ‘over-parenting’. Or a daughter who wants to end the relationship because she can’t get her mother’s anxious voice out of her head.

The conditions under which estrangement might be considered acceptable depend on how cultures regard the obligations of parents and children to each other. Countries clearly differ in those considerations. For example, in the US, the idea that a society would require a grown child to pay for his father’s old-age care would be

considered an intolerable infringement on his rights. However, a federal court in Germany in 2014 ruled in exactly that way against the son, despite the fact that his father had abandoned him four decades earlier and left his estate to his girlfriend. Similarly, in the US, there would be outrage if a law suddenly made it a crime not to visit your ageing parents, yet this is precisely what was prescribed by China's 'Elderly Rights Law' in 2013.

Research on estrangement is still sparse and relatively [new](#). As a result, it's difficult to cite studies showing an increasing trend over time or to assess different rates of estrangement across cultures. However, studies suggest that parents in the US might be more at risk for estrangement than parents in other countries. For example, a large international study in 2010 of nearly 2,700 parents over the age of 65 [found](#) that parents in the US have almost twice as much conflict with their adult children compared with parents in Israel, Germany, England and Spain.

I believe that the strain in relationships between parents and their adult children in the US results partly from the profound social inequality that puts an enormous burden on American families, one that sometimes causes them to break. In addition, high rates of divorce and nonmarital childbearing in the US sometimes weaken ties between parents and their offspring by tempting one parent to blame the other and by inviting new people into the child's life to compete for emotional or material resources. 'I thought my father was a good father until he divorced my mother and left the home,' said a young woman in my practice. 'Even though I was grown, I can't really forgive him for what he did to her so I basically haven't spoken to him since.' In a highly individualistic culture such as ours, divorce can also [cause](#) the child to see the parents more as individuals, with their own strengths and weaknesses, and less as a family unit of which they're a part.

Some of the strain also results from the way that families have changed in late modernity. Today's relationships occur in what the late sociologist Zygmunt Bauman [described](#) as *liquid culture*, a time when norms are constantly changing and the stakes that previously tied individuals together are no longer meaningful. As [pathways](#) to adulthood become more [fraught](#) and precarious, the psychological

orientation needed to survive has been transformed in ways that affect how parents raise children and how their children later reflect on that parenting. Given these constraints, contact with parents becomes motivated less by a sense of obedience or duty – however problematic those expectations might be – than by the way in which the relationship makes the adult child feel about him- or herself. *Does my parent limit my potential? My happiness? My distinctiveness? What does it say about me to stay in contact?* The prevailing sentiment is sometimes *Lose your parent, and find yourself*. ‘I’ve just become clear that I don’t need the stress,’ said Robert, a 28-year-old graduate of an Ivy League school. ‘Since I’ve been in therapy, I’m learning to surround myself with people who don’t make me feel guilty about not being around as much as they want me to. My mom is really needy and I just don’t need that in my life.’

In a poll by Harvard University in 2015, 48 per cent of Americans under 30 [said](#) that the American Dream is dead. In 2018, a report by economists at the US Federal Reserve [noted](#) that, despite being the most educated generation to date: ‘Millennials are less well off than members of earlier generations when they were young, with lower earnings, fewer assets, and less wealth.’ In 2018, just a quarter of young Americans described themselves as [happy](#) – the lowest level recorded by the General Social Survey, a key barometric index of American social life, begun in 1972.

Overall, today’s young adults [attain](#) markers of adulthood far later than their parents did, and in a far less clear-cut sequence. Analysing US census data, one report [found](#) that, in 1960, more adults aged 18 to 34 lived with a spouse than with their parents; by 2014, more young adults lived with their parents than with a husband or wife. At a time when work and personal relationships are more and more fragile, when the traditional markers of a good adult life can no longer be counted on to be there – from a secure job to a secure marriage – it’s neither surprising nor unreasonable that this generation of adults is focused on the one thing they can still control: the pursuit of their own growth and life satisfaction. Estrangement is sometimes part of that effort.

According to a large [study](#) in 2015 by the family researchers Lucy Blake, Becca Bland and Susan Golombok in the UK, some of the most common reasons cited for estrangement by adult children were differences in values, mismatched expectations about family, and mental illness or emotional abuse on the part of the parent. Emotional abuse was one of the most common reasons given by adult children. As a young adult woman in my practice said:

I was always the black sheep in the family growing up. And nothing has really changed. Whenever I complain or try to get them to communicate differently, they just say that I need to grow up and stop being so sensitive. They treat me in ways that I wouldn't treat my worst enemy. For the longest time, I assumed that it was all my fault that I walked around feeling so bad about myself. But I got tired of being gaslit by them and it's not worth the pain. I feel a whole lot better since I don't see them anymore.

In my practice, I have found that accusations of emotional abuse from the adult child are often the area of greatest confusion for parents. As Robert and Becky, two recently estranged parents, put it:

Emotional abuse? We gave our child everything. We read every parenting book under the sun, took her on wonderful vacations, went to all of her sporting events. Want to know who had an abusive childhood? *I* did. Violent, alcoholic father. Checked-out mother. I would've killed to have had a childhood like hers.

Part of this confusion might stem from a generational divide about whom to keep in or exclude from our lives. The psychologist Nick Haslam at the University of Melbourne [notes](#) that in the past three decades there has been an enormous expansion in behaviours described as harmful, traumatising or abusive. On the one hand, this 'concept creep', to use Haslam's term, has refined our ability to detail our experiences and advocate for better and more sensitive treatment from others, parents included. It can help individuals explain to themselves and others the need to cut off contact with hurtful family members. On the other hand, greatly expanding what is considered harmful, abusive or traumatising behaviour has created an enormous expansion of psychiatric diagnoses and an inclusion of phenomena as pathological

that could be considered normal and expectable forms of stress or suffering.

It's an attempt to blame parents for outcomes better explained by class, genes, neighbourhood or luck

In my survey of 1,600 estranged parents and grandparents, I found, as have [others](#), that parents explained their child's estrangement for reasons often quite different from those commonly cited by estranged adult children. For example, while much has been written about the way that alcoholic or mentally ill parents affect children, a similarly diagnosed adult child might become estranged because of an inability to manage the normal slings and arrows of family life. While parents linked their child's entering therapy to their estrangement, others reported that their child's marriage or transition to parenthood created new opportunities for disruption. 'We were really close to our son right up to the point that he got married,' said parents in my practice. 'But his wife basically told him to choose her or us, and he chose her.'

To complicate matters further, estrangement sometimes appears to be an attempt to blame parents for outcomes that could be better explained by class, genes, neighbourhood or luck. In her [book](#) *Coming Up Short* (2013), the sociologist Jennifer Silva details how often today's young working-class adults locate their inability to find a secure path to adulthood in their dysfunctional families:

Family pathology is invoked both to explain (to themselves and to others) why they have not achieved traditional adult milestones and to map meaning, order, and progress onto their experiences of stagnation in the present ... Their foundational belief that they are completely and unconditionally responsible for creating a good life leads young people to examine their personal traits and behaviours for signs of weakness that could explain their precarious lives.

As the sociologist Joseph E Davis at the University of Virginia explained to me in an email: 'Blaming parents for emotional abuse or dysfunction

misses the complex social predicament in which both they and their parents are embedded.'

This linkage between present struggle and family upbringing is easily absorbed from the steady broadcast of therapeutic narratives found in online forums, self-help, recovery groups and talk shows. When I asked one young adult about her chronic feelings of anxiety, she didn't mention the long hours she worked for Uber in order to make ends meet while she took classes at the local college, her difficulty finding affordable childcare for her toddler as a single mother, or her worry about her ability to finish college and have a career. Instead, she blamed her parents for her feelings of anxiety and insecurity.

Making parents culpable for how children turn out is especially unfair when applied to the poor and working classes, notes the historian Stephanie Coontz in *The Way We Never Were* (1992), since research shows that the social dynamics of poverty and low status give them less influence over their children in relation to peer groups than parents in other classes.

Economic [insecurity](#) and the current language of causality also strains and frays family relationships across the classes. 'The social price we pay for pulling apart,' [writes](#) the sociologist Marianne Cooper in *Cut Adrift* (2014), 'is that economic inequality and economic insecurity become experienced as more about who we are or just how the world is and less as a social problem that needs to be solved.' Believing that our current state is a function of who we are invites solutions that are psychological, rather than social, and are destined to fail.

Reflecting on one's [failures](#) or unhappiness often leads to a therapist's office. In today's environment, where pull-yourself-up-by-your-bootstraps narratives predominate, therapists have become the

new high priests [providing](#) moral legitimacy to decisions about whom to keep or lose in one's life, parents included.

Some adult children, often with the aid of their therapists, criticise their parents for failing to provide them with a toolkit sufficient to navigate their lives. They suggest that, if parents had done their job, their offspring would enter adulthood free of anxieties and insecurities, fully equipped to make choices that would guarantee a happy life. This perspective – with roots not only in Sigmund Freud, but John Locke and Jean-Jacques Rousseau – implies that the self is born in an exemplary state, free of weaknesses or shortcomings. As the sociologist Eva Illouz at the Hebrew University of Jerusalem notes, therapeutic narratives have become our way of making sense of our lives and solving the dilemmas for where we find ourselves. 'What is a dysfunctional family?' she [asks](#) in *Saving the Modern Soul* (2008). 'A family where one's needs are not met. How does one know that one's needs were not met in childhood? Simply by looking at one's present condition.'

Prior to the 1960s, therapists were in line with a larger cultural [emphasis](#) on conformity. But today's therapists are keen to remove any obstacles to personal achievement and the realisation of happiness. In his [book](#) *Perpetual Euphoria* (2011), the French philosopher Pascal Bruckner notes:

Democratic societies are characterised by a growing aversion to suffering. We are all the more scandalised by the latter's persistence or spread because we can no longer resort to God for consolation. In that way, the Enlightenment gave rise to a certain number of contradictions from which we have still not emerged.

Today, emotions such as guilt or dispositions to help others become pathologised as 'co-dependence', 'over-responsibility' or 'loving too much'. Therapists have accused parents who were highly involved of being emotionally incestuous or [narcissistic](#), recasting historically high levels of parental involvement as self-serving rather than expressions of love or commitment.

Some know no other way to feel separate from their anxious and involved parents than to reject them

From this vantage point, cutting off contact with a parent is an attempt at purification. It's a way of saying that the limitations in the individual were either put there by the parent or 'triggered' by parental contact. It allows one to hold on to a self-assessment as ideal and without limitations, attributing one's problems to childhood experiences or [chemical imbalances](#) rather than larger societal influences.

For example, take Teresa, a 25-year-old woman who plays flute for the San Francisco Symphony (details changed to protect confidentiality). Throughout her childhood, her mother was intensely involved in her training – taking her to lessons and competitions, encouraging her to practise when she was young until she became old enough to do so without her help. The mother describes herself as following her daughter's desire to get into a competitive conservatory and play with an orchestra, both of which the daughter happily achieved. Last year, Teresa suddenly went 'no contact' after her therapist suggested that her mother likely suffered from narcissistic personality disorder. To her mother, Teresa said:

You cared less about my happiness than my just being a little replica of you. I've realised that I'm a perfectionist and feel like nothing is ever good enough. If you had let me alone, I would be a lot happier. Being around you just reminds me of all of those years.

My work with the family didn't confirm the diagnosis of the mother as a narcissist. Yet, the high level of parental involvement that parents typically undertook over the past four decades can create its own problems. In my practice, I find that some adult children estrange themselves because they know no other way to feel separate from their anxious and involved parents than to reject them.

Adult children might also want to distance themselves because the parent [expects](#) more intimacy or fulfilment than the adult child is able to bear. According to the [survey](#) 'Culture of American Families' (2012) conducted by the Institute for Advanced Studies in Culture, almost three-quarters of today's parents of school-age children say they eventually want to be their children's best friends; only 17 per cent disagree.

Prior generations were less preoccupied with being dutiful and conscientious parents – and in some ways that was a good thing. Before the 1960s, parents were far more involved in their own hobbies, neighbourhood activities and religious institutions, [notes](#) the political scientist Robert Putnam in *Bowling Alone* (2000). They also spent considerable time with their friends. Today, they spend more time than ever on parenting.

Viewed from that perspective, estrangement is sometimes an attempt to develop a sense of self separate from that curated or demanded by the often overinvolved parent. It might explain why the declaration ‘You need to respect my boundaries’ is one of the more common requests of parents that I hear from their adult children, estranged or not. The desire to label the parent as narcissistic or emotionally incestuous might be an attempt to feel less guilty for wanting to give less to the parent than the parent wants to receive.

But parents in the US have become much more worried and involved because they believe it’s the only way to secure their children’s future. In *Love, Money, and Parenting* (2019), the economists Matthias Doepke and Fabrizio Zilibotti [write](#) that, in countries with low social inequality, such as Japan, Germany and most of the northern European nations, parents are happier and more relaxed, prioritising their children’s independence and creativity. Conversely, in countries such as the US, the UK and China – countries with high rates of social inequality – parents are more likely to be anxious and restrictive, as often characterises today’s ‘helicopter parent’ or China’s ‘tiger mom’.

Social inequality is an important index because it reflects how much parents need to do without any support from government or their employers. Contrary to the view that it’s all up to the parents to make a happy life for their children, most other Western industrialised democracies believe that it’s all up to society to help the parents, by providing families with free or subsidised preschool, school lunches, free or subsidised college, health insurance, job training and pensions. If countries with low social inequality and greater supports tend to have

higher indices of happiness (they do), it's in no small measure because they have a lot more to be happy about.

For the adult child, estrangement is governed by powerful narratives of autonomy, individuality and the pursuit of happiness

We used to do more for families in the US. The political scientist Jacob Hacker [noted](#) a 'great risk shift' that occurred during the 1980s when government and corporations shifted healthcare, college expenses and other financial burdens on to the backs of parents. During that time, a narrative of 'We're all in this together' changed to 'Government is the problem' and 'You have no one to blame but yourself for your lack of success.' References to 'survival of the fittest' in the media escalated considerably during that time.

Yet, a majority of Americans still believe that personal effort and grit are the biggest determinants of who succeeds, despite significant evidence to the contrary. This belief system creates enormous suffering and confusion, along with ongoing tension between being told you can be anyone you want, and living with a constant reminder that you're not that person. It begs for a solution that reduces an ongoing self-assessment as flawed or shameful. Blame is its consequence. This might be especially true in middle- and upper-class families where the relentless pressure to be better than everyone else [creates](#) significant depression and anxiety for high-school and college students, as detailed by books such as Malcolm Harris's *Kids These Days* (2017), Madeline Levine's *The Price of Privilege* (2006), Daniel Markovits's *The Meritocracy Trap* (2019) and William Deresiewicz's *Excellent Sheep* (2014).

While [studies](#) show that most adult children think long and hard before cutting off a mother or father, parents are at a distinct disadvantage when faced with an adult child who is willing to end the relationship. For the adult child, estrangement is governed by powerful narratives of autonomy, individuality and the pursuit of happiness – of righting wrongs and pushing back against figures from one's oppressive past.

For the parent, there is no upside to estrangement. It's all downside: shame of failing at life's most important task; grief from the loss of

adult children and grandchildren; the constant undertow of guilt, sorrow and regret.

Freed from the institutional constraints that governed behaviour for millennia, today's family relationships are ruled by a constant and ongoing assessment of one's feelings in relation to the other, based on the principles of self-realisation and personal discovery. This dynamic creates the potential for new possibilities in relations between parent and adult child, many of which are positive: for example, studies show that many of today's parents are in close and regular contact with their adult children, an arrangement that both generations describe as meaningful. In addition, in the same way that there is greater permission to leave abusive marriages, adult children are also no longer obliged to stay in contact with parents who are rejecting or hurtful.

However, in unmooring individuals from the commitments that guided generations for centuries – defining family relations as either a source of personal growth and happiness or an impediment to personal fulfilment – we have created the potential for enormous upheaval and disruption for individuals and for society at large. We ignore it at our own peril.

To read more on dealing with [unhealthy perfectionism](#) and repairing a [family rift](#), visit Aeon's sister site, [Psyche](#), a new digital magazine that illuminates the human condition through psychological knowhow, philosophical understanding and artistic insight.

CHILDREN'S RIGHTS

VULNERABLE CITIZENS: THE OPPRESSION OF CHILDREN IN CARE

Kim Snow

<https://cyc-net.org/cyc-online/cyconline-dec2009-snow.html>

Abstract: This paper frames children in out-of-home care as a singularly oppressed group. Children as citizens are considered in terms of their rights, evolving capacities, best interests and voice. Using recognized criteria determining oppression, the situation of youth in care as an associative group is contrasted with that of children in general, as an aggregate group. Children's rights and participation- called for in the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child- are examined with particular focus on children's voice in relation to regulated care. Child and youth practitioners are urged to become champions for children's rights and to speak out on behalf of youth in care, a most particularly oppressed group.

This paper is informed by conceptualizing youth in care as a uniquely oppressed group of children. Consistent with the author's liberatory pedagogical orientation to practice, the intent is to inform and elucidate the situation of youth in care, and to advocate on their behalf.

Outlined is the general oppression of children as an aggregate group, and particularly the uniquely oppressive situation of youth in the wardship of the state, as an associative group. An aggregate group is: "A total considered with reference to its constituent parts"; an associative group is: "Of, characterized by resulting from, or causing association" (American Heritage Dictionary, 1994).

Thinking about children as citizens

The need for, and the entitlement of, children to be rights bearers remains to this day a controversial topic. Historically and currently, it has been argued that children do not need to be individual rights bearers, due to their perceived incompetence, and the fact of their dependency on others who are presumed to act in their best interests.

Children's rights have been debated in the literature of many disciplines, for example: psychiatry (Kahn, 1974), philosophy (Worsford, 1974), psychology (Hart, 1991), and law (Roche, 1995).

Children and rights.

As with other considerations of human rights, the specific civil and political, and the economic, social and cultural rights of children are also considered. Civil and political rights are often referred to as participatory rights: the right to vote, the right to freedom of expression and opinion-non-discrimination, and name and identity rights are examples of civil and political rights and freedoms. Economic, social, and cultural rights are referred to as protection and provision rights, such as right to life and survival, protection from economic exploitation, rights to an adequate standard of living, name, nationality and family, and freedom of belief and education.

A rights framework is particularly useful in considering situations under totalitarian forms of domination. Without basic survival rights, citizens die. Domination is distinctly oppressive by its tactics of marginalization, which can include extreme material deprivation leading to the possibility of extermination. In situations of extreme marginalization, the oppressed group is unable to mobilize strategies of resistance. Total domination as an oppressive force is of such distinction that, if the oppressed are to survive, outside forces must intervene and speak on their behalf.

Rights empower disadvantaged groups; they redistribute power and offer tools for engaging in dialogue. Save for emancipation from tyranny, rights do not overturn existing power structures. The fear that children having rights would result in their becoming omnipotent is parallel to fears expressed concerning other rights movements, such as those on behalf of black Americans and women. Through the attainment of equal rights, adult oppressed groups have not created anarchy, nor for that matter have they truly achieved equality. Children, with their vulnerability and dependency status, and their lack of economic and civil rights, have and always will be in a disempowered position.

Children's evolving capacity.

It is recognized around the world that children's vulnerability and dependency status require that they be provided special rights to safeguard their well-being and ensure their healthy participation in society (United Nations [UN], 1989/1991). The complicating factor with children is that, because the evolution of their ability to assert their rights is gradual, society must ensure that they be safeguarded and consider their best interests (Boulding, 1979). At periods in the child's development, he/she literally has no ability to speak out, and so others must be in a decision-making role and therefore speak for the child or allow the child to speak through them (Woodhouse, 1993).

The best interests debate.

The best interests debate is a complex one, juggling a range of competing interests. It is difficult to define what exactly best interests are. How does one know what exactly is in the best interests of another person? Who makes the decision? What happens if what one person believes is in the child's best interest is believed by another to actually be harmful to the child? How are best interest debates conceptualized? Who has a say and how is the decision made? In North American culture, the biological supremacy of the birth family has dominated decision-making in child custody decisions, as has the primacy of the biological family in the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child (1989).

Best interests decisions have held medical judgment as a superior decider in matters affecting children – with at times disastrous results (Yolles, 1998/2000; Bellamy, 2005). Best interests ideologies have also driven harmful immigration and child welfare assimilation programs (Law Commission of Canada, 1998).

Fundamental to the concept of best interests is that children are not competent and therefore are incapable of being full-fledged, rights bearers. Indeed the presumption of incompetence has dominated legal and medical judgments of children's ability to give testimony or consent (Goldstein, Solnit, Goldstein & Freud, 1996). Generally, the age of 12 has come to be seen as the age when the child has sufficient competence for his or her opinions to be considered in legal and medical matters (Yolles, 1998/2000).

Children are dependent and require others to care for and protect them. Adults in children's lives must provide for, guide, and direct them. Some people argue that due to this dependency, children do not need rights, as the caregivers have parental rights. Parents do indeed make decisions for children, and parents are rights bearers. This argument does not, however, consider that 1) caregivers do not always protect and care for children, and 2) as children grow up, they are progressively both capable of and seek out opportunities for input into decisions that concern them.

Children's evolving capacity to assert their rights allows for the gradual mastery of decision-making. When children are allowed the opportunity to be heard in matters that affect them, they develop competency and the ability to function in a civilized society.

It is important to remember that the UNCRC provides for participatory rights. Having the right to participate, however, is not the same as having the right to decide. Participatory rights simply allow children the opportunity, in matters that affect them, to express their views to the decision maker.

Notions of voice.

By their very nature, rights require that they be asserted, which demands voice (Wringe, 1981). For example, in participatory rights, one is expressing one's voice through voting. In legal rights one seeks redress through the courts and an advocate. In moral rights one calls on the community for approval or condemnation. Voice is a significant participatory right. It is considered a fundamental right of democracy (Schulz, 2003; Ignatieff, 2004). Voice is protective, in that it allows individuals to assert their wishes, and if their wishes are not respected, voice enables them to tell someone what occurred, providing them with someone to bear witness or even with redress. Voice is a significant safeguard which permits greater transparency in systems and in the lives of the vulnerable.

Voice is clinically significant in all talking and psychotherapeutic processes (Gilligan, 1982). For example, from narrative therapy to cognitive behavioural therapy to psychoanalysis, in one form or another, the telling of one's story is central to the work.

The attainment of voice is a developmental process crucial to healthy emotional and social development. Using their voice challenges children's cognitive abilities and gives them skills necessary to function in life and relationships, and as citizens. The acquisition of responsible, thoughtful decision-making is in fact the task of development. Telling one's story and speaking out is also a feature in self-help consumer programs (Goffman, 1966).

Participatory rights are a mechanism of socialization (Roche, 1999). Empowerment is a community process because kids do not have full participatory rights to decide. It must be noted, however, that the concept of "empowerment" is problematic; one cannot give someone power. One can share power, or assert power, and one can capture power, but one cannot hand power over to someone else. People can and should capture their own power, and they should also share power, and it would seem that this is what is commonly understood by the term "empowerment".

Children learn to make good decisions by negotiating day-to-day choices and having their input into life-decisions affecting them. In fact, growing up healthy demands assuming increasing input into one's own day-to-day life choices. Adults help children develop good decision-making skills by giving them the opportunity to negotiate day-to-day choices and by soliciting their input into life decisions.

Are children an oppressed group?

A group is an organization in society and is more than just the sum of the parts of which it is composed (Durkheim, 1985). Social groups express social relations and are formed by aggregation or association. Children in general are a social group by aggregate, and children in care are a social group by association.

Oppression is a social concept that prevents the individual or group from realizing the ability to achieve a good life. "Oppression refers to structural phenomena that immobilize or diminish a group" (Young, 1990, p.42). The forces of oppression do harm through coercion of individuals and of groups, and by privileging one group over another.

The injustice of oppression is fundamental to the functioning of social institutions. It names oppression as the social injustice "...perpetrated through social institutions, practices and norms on social groups by social groups. ...Although oppression afflicts whole groups of persons, it is fundamentally the individuals in those groups who suffer" (Cudd, 2005, p.21). Cultures and institutions develop unique languages which have a profound effect on voice. These languages shape and support or inhibit the expression of voice. The dominant force creates the language, which necessitates that the minority seek fluency in the language of the institution. This is about the oppressed having the dual perspective of understanding their own interests and the interests of the ruler by means of capturing language. As a result of their dual attendance to both of these interests, they develop dual vision and express it by capturing the language of the ruler and becoming bilingual (Swigonski, 1994).

As Freire (1994) observes, this dual attendance serves as a mechanism of oppression in that it results in individuals understanding their interests in ways that reflect the interests of the dominant group. On the other hand, it is recognized that capturing and claiming another's language is a power move that is an act of resistance (Fanon, 1963).

Young (1990) defines five forms of oppression as criteria for classifying a group as oppressed. Exploitation, marginalization, and powerlessness are structural or systemic forms of oppression while cultural imperialism and violence are systematic forms of oppression.

There are two recognized oppressive forces. Systemic or structural oppression, and systematic oppression. Systemic oppression is the mechanism whereby structural oppression is reproduced in institutional structures. Structural oppression is "embedded in unquestioned norms, habits and symbols systematically reproduced" in the rules, markets, and bureaucracies of society (Young, 1990, p.41). "The systemic character of oppression implies that an oppressed group need not have a correlate oppressing group" (Young, 1990, p.41). Thus the practices and processes of day-to-day life serve to reinforce oppressive structural relations (Smith, 1990) without the intention of any individual to oppress.

There are two forms of systematic oppression: cultural imperialism and violence. Cultural imperialism occurs when the dominant customs, conventions, standards and norms of a society obliterate those of one group and mark that group as *the other* (Riggins, 1997). It is the domination of one group's beliefs, customs, and behaviours as normative for all members of a society. It is systematic in that it resides on multiple institutional planes, creating hurdles that block advancement through the system and penalizing by exclusion.

Violence by act or by threat of physical force, marginalization, or exclusion is oppressive. It can be perpetrated on individuals and groups, by individuals or groups. Exclusion, by categorization or

marginalization, is an act of violence, as is obliterating others" ideologies. As such, violence is also embedded in structural oppression. It is systematic in that the threat of violence silences.

Applying these criteria to children in general, and more specifically to youth in care, helps us to consider whether children are oppressed or not.

Exploitation.

Exploitation is traditionally economic victimization whereby one individual or group unfairly takes advantage of another. Exploitation can be in the market economy, as traditionally thought of with regard to labour. It can also use physical force or manipulation and other victimization of the person. As well, one can be exploited as a source of information or knowledge by means of extracting value from subjects / objects of study.

Throughout history, children have been exploited in the market economy for both their labour (Scott, 1993; Taylor, 1982) and their exclusion from the labour force (Schissel, 1997). As a class, they have been legal property, sold, incarcerated, and victimized (deMause, 1974). Through governmentality, they have been made into an industry of study by the disciplines (Foucault, 1991). Canadian youth in out-of-home care are disproportionately drawn from other Canadian oppressed groups, in particular lower socio-economic populations (National Council on Welfare, 1979; Ryerse, 1990; Wharf, 1995; Trocme, Fallon, MacLaurin, Daciuk, Felstiner, Black et al., 2005). Children in care by eligibility definition have been subject to physical, psychological, or emotional harm by means of victimization by familial, extra-familial, and institutional sources (Law Commission of Canada, 1998; Trocme, et al., 2005).

Children leaving care are vulnerable to becoming commodities in the sex trade (Biehal, Clayden, Stein & Wade, 1994; Keller, Kelleher & Corbett, 2000). Numerous studies have found lower socio-economic, educational, and vocational attainment in former youth in care (Aldgate, 1994; West, 1995; Owen, 2000; Kufeldt, 2003). There are indications that they are overrepresented in criminal justice proceedings (Coles, 1998; Keller et al., 2000; Finlay, 2003). This is interesting in that, much like a youth in care, a prisoner is a commodity as both object and subject of the penal function of rule.

Children in out-of-home care are in a recipient role in a structural institution that has historically reinforced the ruling relations (Rooke & Schnell, 1982; Armitage, 1993). Upon becoming a ward of the state, the child is a commodity of the system, one with physical structure and financial value, and is a subject and object of inquiry and investigation. Indeed, youth in care have been the subject of considerable discussion in the academic literature – this article being no exception – and function as a commodity of a conglomerate of child-saving disciplines (Foucault, 1994b; Anglin, 1999).

Marginalization.

Marginalization is exclusion from civil and economic society to one degree or another. At its worst, it constitutes material deprivation and the possibility of extermination. It is perhaps the most dangerous and insidious form of oppression (Young, 1990). Mechanisms of marginalization have a silencing effect, as does institutional culture (Smith, 1990).

Stigmatization is a form of marginalization that generates alienation. Stigmatized individuals form aggregate groups which alter their relations within society (Goffman, 1963). Stigmatized groups

often form organizations that function to inform the public, provide a place of belonging and exchange information.

Children in current times are marginalized, both by their dependency status and their exclusion from the market economy. They are excluded and institutionalized in schools and other agencies of the state. Children have historically been subject to the most extreme form of marginalization, that of infanticide (deMause, 1974).

Youth in care are marginalized by virtue of their developmental capacity, their lack of civil and economic rights, and their institutional regulation. As with all children in Canada, they are excluded from the labour market, but additionally, in care, they become transformed by association into a commodity of the system.

There are suggestions that some youth leaving care face an elevated death rate in the period just preceding their discharge from state care (Thompson & Newman, 1995). They have an increased risk of homelessness and are viewed as "one of the most vulnerable and disadvantaged groups in society" (Mendes, 2005 p.155). They are seen to have developmental lags as compared to their aggregate peers on a number of economic and educational measures. In the education system, youth in care are marginalized by virtue of stigma and often found to be trailing behind their peers academically (Cook, Fleishman & Grimes, 1991; Kufeldt, 2003).

Stigma, a particular form of exploitation, is identified as a concern in numerous studies on youth in care (Raychaba, 1991; McMillan, Rideout, Fisher & Tucker, 1997; Snow & Finlay, 1998; Martin, 2003). Youth in out-of-home care report feelings of stigmatization and alienation (Raychaba, 1991: 1993; Desetta, 1996). Institutional effects serve to maintain alienation from the dominant social group (Goffman, 1961). Stigmatized groups have been known to form affiliate groups as a means of resistance. This form of organization has been evident with the emergence of consumer groups in service systems and youth-in-care groups in children's service systems.

Powerlessness.

The powerless are those who lack authority and agency. Many injustices are associated with powerlessness, and oppressive forces render an individual powerless. Children are rendered powerless by virtue of their developmental capacities, by their lack of decision-making power over their lives and by exposure to disrespectful treatment because of their age, size, and status as a child.

Children's dependency status and their evolving capacity to assert their rights render them, as a social group, powerless (Boulding, 1979). Not only do children lack participatory rights, but the very notion of children as rights bearers has been subject to considerable debate (Feshbach & Feshbach, 1978; Boulding, 1979; Knitzer, 1982; Hart, 1991).

Participation in one's life and community are fundamental tenets of citizenship. Children have no means of asserting economic or political rights. Children's developmental capacity evolves, as does their decision making capacity. Children's dependency status requires that others be in the decision-making role. The lack of capacity for voice renders children powerless. Having voice in the decision-making process is a significant participatory right.

Youth in care are powerless above all by virtue of their associative status and by being subject and object of the children's service disciplines. Someone else determines that they are going into care; they are put in an alien culture where strangers make decisions for and about them. They

are subjects of extensive documentation yet have few means to influence its content. Their resultant powerlessness is exacerbated by adults' presumption of their incompetence and by the bias of best interests decision-making.

Cultural imperialism.

Cultural imperialism occurs when one group is marked as the other. This results in the universalization of the dominant group experience and stigmatizes those whose experience is not that of the universal.

Children experience cultural imperialism as a function of being part of an aggregate social group by age in an adult world. The child has been socially constructed by the ruling class in different ways throughout history, always reflecting the dominant ideology of the era (Aries, 1960; Schissel, 1997).

As an associative social group, children in care also face cultural imperialism from the professional world of social services and its disciplinary practices (Foucault, 1978). Children who are away from home for voluntary or involuntary reasons are further disempowered by their lack of established power and status within the culture. Moreover, in a textually ruled existence, youth must become bilingual in the dominant culture of the world of social services.

The lack of stability for children in out-of-home placements further magnifies the power imbalance and serves as a silencing mechanism. Children in out-of-home care are categorized, analyzed, disciplined, documented, regulated, institutionalized, and silenced through tactics of governmentality (Foucault, 1978). The experience of youth in care is filtered through the lenses of the dominant culture.

Children in care face cultural imperialism on a micro level by changes in their day-to-day life space. For example, a new placement entails a change in basic routines and living arrangements, from where one sleeps to where and what and when one eats, and whom one interacts with. On the mezzo level, by means of change in their school setting and its social structures, they experience cultural imperialism. On a macro level, it is imposed in that they are subject and object of state rule, observation, and examination.

Violence.

Violence is oppressive through the act or threat of exclusion or physical force. Violence can be employed by individuals or groups and applied to individuals or groups. The threat of violence systematically silences.

Children in general are at known risk of violent victimization, and as a result of their age, size, and status are subject to exploitation and exclusion (Trocme et al. 2005).

Children in care, by definition, are more likely to have experienced violence, loss, trauma, neglect and/or have physical or developmental disabilities which make them more vulnerable. Communication deficits represent a significant vulnerability due to the inability to use voice protectively.

Children in out-of-home care are subjected to a high degree of enforced instability which further inhibits their life chances (Lafrance, 1998). The multiple placements experienced by children in

care create a silencing mechanism by altering the child's ability to form trusting relationships (Barth, 1997).

Historically, children in institutional care have experienced abuse and are at known risk of victimization (Robin, 1982; DiLeonardi & Kelly, 1989; Campbell, 1990; Murray & Sefchik, 1992; Boyd, 1992). Currently, institutions also inflict violence on their charges at an arbitrarily determined age by the harsh, abrupt, and absolute expulsion from panoptic care as a farewell from their state parent (Martin, 2003; Kufeldt, 2003; Mann-Feder & White, 2003).

Death in an institution is generally recognized as a matter calling for inquiry, for example, the death of a prisoner while incarcerated, or a patient in a hospital or other such facility. Sometimes children's deaths are the subject of inquiry, but it is interesting to note that, in Canada, it is not consistently required that a child's death be reviewed if they are a ward of the state (Gove, 1995). In Ontario, as in some other provinces, coroners' inquests have examined the unique circumstances surrounding the death of specific children who were charges of the state. In the deaths of two children in Ontario's care, both were as a result of physical force in the manner of physical restraint (Clark, 2001; Lucas, 2002). In Ontario, a coroner makes a determination of both the means and cause of death in a suspicious fatality. For example, the means of death can include suicide, homicide, accident, or undetermined. In the death of 13-year-old William Edgar, Coroner for Ontario Dr. Peter Clark (2001) found the means to be homicide. The cause of death was determined to be asphyxia while being restrained. In the second case, that of 13-year-old Stephanie Jobin, a child with complex developmental disabilities, Ontario Coroner Dr. William Lucas (2002) delivered a finding of undetermined means of death. He found the cause of death to be cardiopulmonary arrest associated with restraint. Both these two young wards of Ontario died as a result of the violence of their caregivers.

Are children in care an oppressed group?

Children in out-of-home care form an associative group that experiences the five criteria for oppression presented in Young's (1990) model. They are exploited as a commodity of the system and by virtue of their stigmatization. They are marginalized in institutional rule by diminished life chances and an exclusionary stigma. They are rendered powerless by the medico-judicial system that they enter as wards of the state. Their evolving capacity to assert their rights makes them powerless subject to the decisions of strangers. They are culturally dominated by the children's service disciplinary ideology and through their experience of instability and changes imposed on their life space. Youth in care are known to be at greater risk of victimization and violence by virtue of both their dependency state and care status. There is compelling evidence, then, to argue that children in care are uniquely oppressed.

In considering youth in care as an oppressed group, it is important to understand their singular group oppression. A rights-based approach calls for examining situations when rights are denied and determining what the barriers are to their fulfilment. Many youth in care do well and are aided by the system's care. These successes need to be celebrated. At the same time, by understanding the exceptions, by problematizing the situations, we shed light on ways to enhance practice. It is necessary, then, to try to understand why some youth in care have poorer life chances and to explore what can be done to improve them. There are many things to consider when understanding the lags that characterize some youth in care post discharge. These include the specific characteristics that brought the child into care, the services received by the child in care, as well as his/her well-being and stability post discharge (McDonald, Allen, Westerfelt & Piliavin, 1996).

We also need to understand the factors that lead to resiliency and the protections and opportunities gained by having been in the system (Hines, Merdinger & Wyatt, 2005). Examining the exceptions does not diminish the value of the majority of good works provided in child protection services. Rather, exploring the exceptions helps to guide us in directions that seek the full realization of the rights of all children.

Child advocacy and child and youth care practice

With the emergence of a global economy, the risk of increased class divisions is emerging as a substantial threat to disadvantaged and marginalized groups (Bauman, 1999; Farmer, 2003). The growing disparities between rich and poor will have the most profound impact on young people. As children have no economic or political means, they will continue to be disproportionately disadvantaged. Evidence of this increased disparity is demonstrated by the rising rate of child poverty in the wealthy country of the USA, the world's superpower (Bellamy, 2005).

The United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child.

The United Nations (UN) Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC) is a legal document that sets minimum international standards for the civil, political, economic, social, and cultural rights of children. The UN working group that drafted the convention included 42 member countries and took ten years to create it. The initial response to the proposal was somewhat mixed. Some countries argued that other treaties covering basic human rights would protect the rights of the child, whereas others recognized that children require special protections because of their age and dependency status (Scott, 1993).

A convention is also known as a treaty. A treaty is a binding agreement made by independent countries or states. By violating these obligations, a country is in fact violating international law. International human rights instruments differ from national law in that they do not provide means of enforcement. The UNCRC incorporates implementation mechanisms such that states party to it must submit periodic reports to the Committee on the Rights of the Child. Interestingly, the Convention implementation procedure allows for reports from sources other than governments, including specialized agencies, the United Nations Children's Fund, and other competent bodies, which permits non-governmental organizations unfettered access to the Committee (Cohen, Stuart & Kosloske, 1996).

Although the UNCRC is a legal document, it is important to recognize the fact that Canada's ratification of the Convention does not automatically make it domestic law. As an international convention, it expresses obligations that Canada has assumed, but is not technically binding until such time as the Canadian law has been challenged and the Convention in fact becomes part of domestic law. The Convention does not enable children, for example, to go to court for redress of rights that have been breached, but rather, it is used for the interpretation and application of domestic law. This is a similar approach to human rights legislation as has been applied in Canadian courts with the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms.

On the other hand, that the world has agreed to this Convention creates a powerful moral obligation for nations and individuals to uphold its standards, despite the lack of formal legal requirements to do so. The UNCRC recognizes the child's economic, emotional, spiritual, and physical needs while also respecting the rights and obligations of parents to guide their children. It recognizes that children's capacity to exercise their rights evolves as they grow and develop. Essentially, the Convention notes the developmental progression of the child's ability to assert his/her rights and the parallel responsibility of parent and state to ensure the best interests of the

child. Indeed, the dichotomy of rights and best interests has created a tension in the implementation of the Convention world-wide.

The universal adoption of the UNCRC by all nations except Somalia and the US suggests that the majority of the world had come to a moral understanding or agreement about the need to ensure that the child's rights are protected like those of any other human individual. This acknowledges that the child is an individual who is not only a member of a family, a community, a state, and a country, but also a unique individual with economic, social, cultural, and political and civil rights. The fact that the world has come to this moral understanding demonstrates the maturing of our society and also indicates that the authors of the UNCRC realized that without ensuring economic and basic need entitlements for children, their civil and political rights would not be realized.

The rights of youth in care.

Youth in care, by definition, are an associative group subject to legal and state intervention, and indeed, the state assumes guardianship in loco parentis. With variable standing as rights bearers, youth are subject to various legislative and regulatory inquiries. As with all children, they lack economic and political rights and are subject to control and corporal manipulation. Additionally, for youth in care, the provision of civil, cultural, and social rights is entirely dependent on the state.

There is an urgent need to hear from and try to understand children who grow up regulated. Listening to the voice of children not only fulfils Article 12 of the UNCRC, it should form the primary principle guiding child and youth care practice. Child and youth care practitioners have a duty of care to the children under their scrutiny. A rights-based approach to service delivery helps us learn from past mistakes of colonizing child welfare practices by illustrating the oppressive potential of state care. A rights-based approach provides a language of entitlement which is internationally recognized as essential to the care and protection of children. Ensuring the full realisation of rights for youth in state care sets an example for society, demonstrating the state's commitment to children as citizens and, most particularly, the state's duty to care and protect its wards. A rights-based approach avoids the trap of conflicting needs as it establishes minimum provisions and seeks to ensure the full realisation of all rights.

We need to consider the unique vulnerabilities of youth in care and their consequent need for advocates. Their vulnerability is increased when they enter care as a result of being removed from kinship and natural advocates. They are made further vulnerable because they are made dependent on the care and decisions of strangers. Moreover, their institutional affiliation and the biopolitical colonization of childhood (Bell, 1983) makes them even more vulnerable in their absolute dependency on the control and custody of the system. Their developmental capacities contribute to their vulnerability, as does the harm they suffered which caused them to be brought into care. The repeated disconnections and resultant lack of extended social support networks are additional factors that make them vulnerable.

Rights based practice. Gilligan, Ward, Taylor, and Bardige (1988) describe two ethical orientations which people use to judge things as right or wrong. A justice orientation is based on roles, rules, and reciprocity contrasted with a care orientation, which is inclusive, responsive to the needs of others, and acts to minimize harm. Martin (2003) argues that effective child protection workers are those who are oriented to a care perspective and inclined to bend the rules. These workers focus on meeting needs and providing entitlements rather than the worker's activities being directed entirely by policy and procedures.

Paramount to the practice of child protection is respect for the child's uniqueness and dignity. Workers genuinely like to be with children and value and respect the voice of the child. Effective child protection workers make it their mission to understand and meet the needs of the youth in their care. Good workers ensure that documentation is respectful of the dignity of the child, that the child has access to such documentation, and most importantly, that the child be given the opportunity to amend such documentation. Skilled workers adopt a rights-based approach and a care orientation to practice. They educate youth and colleagues about the rights of the child and teach strategies of self-advocacy. They commit to children and walk protectively beside the child as he/she navigates the system. They lobby for the need for time to develop and sustain genuine relationships with young people in their care. They watch for gaps in services, identify them to authorities, and seek means to remove them. They use their insider status to influence departmental policies and procedures in the interest of children in care, and they employ their citizenship rights to lobby government on behalf of their charges as well.

Institutions genuinely concerned about the welfare and future of children in the care of the state must adopt a child rights approach and a care orientation to their practice. It is important that they make it their mission to educate staff, community, and clients about the rights of the child and, in that context, to teach everyone advocacy strategies. They need to build a supportive atmosphere that fosters workers' developing meaningful and supportive interpersonal relationships with the children they care for. By ensuring sufficient time is provided, the institution allows the worker to engage in a manner that is respectful of the child's dignity and to provide for the child's developmental needs. Institutions must foster a climate of advocacy that protects advocates and youth from retaliation for whistleblowing (Grover, 2004). They must ensure that the rights of the child are clearly outlined in policies which stand separate from those delineating responsibilities and prohibitions. And finally, child-rights focussed institutions use their influence as organizations and individuals to politically advocate for the needs and interests of children in state care (Herbert & Mould, 1992).

The children's service disciplines, which make it their business to describe, evaluate, and regulate children in care, must be in the foreground of rights advocacy for children in care. Academics and other professionals must use their position of privilege to make known and lobby for the unique needs of children in care and to speak out about their oppression. They need to support the creation of legislation that supports rights and mandates advocacy for children at all levels of society, from institutional child advocacy to independent political advocacy at all levels of government, municipal, provincial, and federal.

Individual practitioners, institutions, and the disciplines of children's services must combat the stigmatizing effects of care and seek to understand and foster resilience in the face of stigma. Stigmatized individuals develop a devalued and shame-based identity. However, individuals can develop strategies that ameliorate the negative effects of stigmatization by employing multiple identities, compensation, and strategic interpretations of their environment. Shih (2004) defines compensatory strategies as skills developed by managing a sense of stigma, for example, by trying harder to become more likeable and socially desirable. Stigmatized individuals refine social skills, anticipate prejudice, and act in ways that counter stereotypes. It is recognized that all people carry multiple identities in their various roles in society, for example, gender, religion, and occupation. Identity switching can strategically emphasize highly valued identities and de-emphasize stigmatized ones.

By manipulating interpretations of their social environments and by placing blame on external environments, individuals are able to strategically cushion their sense of self worth. They can be selective in their choice of social groups and advantage themselves by seeking in-group alliances. They may minimize or deny what they choose to explain as the cause of social prejudice and

injustices. Shih's (2004) discussion of resilience in the face of stigma provides a valuable contribution to the literature and offers child protection a way of understanding stigma within its system. It is incumbent upon child welfare practitioners and institutions to actively understand stigma and resilience in the face of a child's stigmatized identity.

We must support the development of protective advocacy webs for all youth in care by establishing and supporting both internal and independent youth-driven advocacy networks. By virtue of being separated from kin, natural advocates, and peers, youth face significant challenges to their sense of belonging. Maslow (1954) determined belonging as one of five basic human needs, arguing that it is genetically programmed. Hudson (2000) has recognized the value of peer groups as a resource for supporting youth. Stigmatized individuals seek out group affiliations to find belonging and understanding through commonality and as a means of bringing voice to shared concerns. Networking opportunities are ways of coping with a stigmatized identity as well as a means to mobilize resistance to oppression. Child protection must support the development of protective advocacy networks for all youth in care. Both internal and independent youth-driven advocacy networks should be established with the specific purpose of voicing the concerns of the group and enacting the realization of the rights of youth in care.

Children and youth in care are subject to the five forms of oppression outlined by Young (1990). They are exploited functionally and materially as a case. They are powerless in a dominant system and lack economic and political rights. They are at times subject to violence at the hands of the state and within their community and kinship relations. Youth in care experience cultural imperialism as both a function of being regulated and by virtue of their physical location residing with strangers. Youth in care are generally marginalized as a result of the stigma with which society brands them and, economically, by the manner of their termination from care.

As a demonstration of their concern for children, practitioners must adopt a rights-based and care-oriented approach to service. As marginals, youth in care must have allies and advocates to stand with them and by them and to speak out on their behalf to the dominant society. The UNCRC provides a platform and a common language to speak out in defence of oppressed children. As international law, the UNCRC holds moral and legal authority when seeking redress for children. The Convention contains markers and standards for children's participation and protection, and for the provision of their rights. As a tool, it serves as a guide for respectful interactions with children which preserve their dignity and promote their full development.

The disciplines of children's services must be at the forefront of the child rights movement. It is incumbent upon them to lead the charge for the full realization of the UNCRC. The children in our care deserve no less.

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Our Common Heritage: Oppression of Children

<https://parentingforsocialchange.com/common-oppression-of-childhood-html/>

This website is well worth looking at very carefully.

As I have begun exploring the dimensions of our experiences as children in an adult dominated world, I have realized the commonality of our experiences as children. We may come from different social identities and experiences, and yet the overwhelming majority of those of us who are now adults had common experiences as children.

It is this commonality that creates the foundation for inequity and domination in our society. As we grew and were socialized by individuals and institutions, the impact of other social identities such as socio-economic status, race, ethnicity, gender identity, sexual orientation, disability, and/or religious identity became much more pronounced.

We may have had loving parents and caring teachers. However, in our culture and society, the dominant paradigm is one of adults controlling the lives of children. Even if done with love, this control and domination fundamentally disempowers children.

Our paradigm teaches children to question themselves and rely on authority figures to make decisions for them and to tell them what is right. The need for autonomy and self-determination is sacrificed to the need for order and productivity. Indoctrination into this kind of world-view is easier if the power of children is dismissed and disregarded.

The loss of our **inner authority** and voice in childhood creates fertile ground for our institutions to teach us that using **power over others** is the only way in which our society can flourish, be productive and succeed. On the margins of our society there have always been individuals and social movements that challenged the dominant paradigm. This is also occurring as it relates to adultism and the treatment of children.

Children have tremendous personal power. When they stay connected to this power and that connection is honored by the adults around them, they are able to create lives that are whole, authentic and healthy.

They do not have the need to use power over others.

By no means does this imply that children who are connected to their inner authority and personal power will not be angry, sad, hit a sibling, or yell. But the need to re-gain their voice and autonomy will not be at the expense of those around them as they grow into adulthood.

If we are committed to social change, it is important for us to challenge the inequities we see in the world around us. If we do this, but never address the inequities of childhood, we are missing the most important opportunity we have to create social change.

I know that as a parent, I missed this opportunity for the first four years of of the oldest child in my life. My professional life had been dedicated to trying to address inequities, and yet, I perpetuated them (and at times still do) in my own home with the children in my life.

At a very fundamental and core level, if we create a world in which children are empowered from birth, we are starting a revolution in each child that will change the world.

Understanding the Social and Emotional Wellbeing of Aboriginal LGBTIQ(SB)+ Youth in Victoria's Youth Detention

<https://www.cogitatiopress.com/socialinclusion/article/download/3770/3770>

Sexual Minority Youth and the Juvenile Justice System: A Poignant Need Group

<https://www.omicsonline.org/open-access/sexual-minority-youth-and-the-juvenile-justice-system-a-poignant-need-group-2161-0711-1000625-104648.html>

Glossary

Term / Legislation Definition / Explanation

extracted from:

page 184 Making Disability Rights Real Whakatūturū Ngā Tika Hauātanga

Third report of the Independent Monitoring Mechanism of the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities
Aotearoa | New Zealand 2014–2019

https://www.hrc.co.nz/files/3415/9348/7609/Making_Disability_Rights_Real_2014-2019_compressed.pdf

This Glossary introduces many important terms used in discussing disability, that relate to the situation in NZ. If you have an idea of what sort of issue you want to look up, this glossary may give you the exact word and spelling. This helps in then searching for more information eg using internet search or talking to other people.

This Glossary covers some of the United Nations Covenants that protect human rights, certainly those most relevant to people with disabilities.

Access 2020 Disability Strategy

The Electoral Commission's disability strategy. It describes how barriers disabled people may face when enrolling and voting will be identified and reduced, to allow full participation in the electoral process.

Accessibility Charter

The Government's initiative to ensure communication, services and information provided by state sector agencies are available to everyone. See 'Leading the way in accessible information' below.

Accident Compensation Corporation (ACC)

New Zealanders are covered by a no-fault scheme if they have been injured in an accident. The cover provided helps pay for the costs of recovery and is administered by the Accident Compensation Corporation, a government agency.

Arts Access Aotearoa

Focuses on supporting disabled people to create and participate in art of all kinds; encouraging performing arts companies, venues, producers and artists to increase their accessibility; and facilitating arts-based rehabilitative projects and programmes in prisons.

Building Act 2004 and Building Code

All building work in New Zealand must comply with the Building Code. The Building Code is contained in regulations under the Building Act 2004. The Act governs building work in New Zealand.

CCS Disability Action

CCS Disability Action is a nationwide nongovernmental organisation (NGO) providing support, advocacy, and information for disabled people.

Code of Health and Disability Services Consumers' Rights

Sets out the rights that New Zealanders have when using a health or disability service. These are called the Code of Health and Disability Services Consumers' Rights or 'the Code'.

Code of Professional Responsibility and Standards for the Teaching Profession

Sets out standards for ethical behaviour expected of every teacher in New Zealand.

Committee on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights (CESCR)

United Nations Committee overseeing the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights (ICESCR).

Concluding Observations

Are assessments of the implementation of human rights treaties by a state, issued by the respective treaty bodies after their examination of the State Reports. They also use additional information— for example, from national or international nongovernmental organisations. Also referred to as Concluding Comments.

Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (CRPD)

See United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities

Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples

See United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples

DIDRR Disability-Inclusive Disaster Risk Reduction

Disability Action Plan Provides a cross-government mechanism to progress action on the implementation of the Disability Strategy. The renewed 2019–2023 plan updates the previous Disability Action Plan, in consultation with the NZ disability community aligning its objectives with the Disability Committee’s List of Issues.

Disability Committee

The Committee on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (referred to as the Disability Committee in this report) is the body of independent experts which monitors implementation of the Disability Convention by the States Parties in the United Nations.

Disability Employment Forum

A collaboration between disabled people’s organisations, employment support services, and peak bodies.

Disability Rights Commissioner

The position of Disability Rights Commissioner was created by an amendment to the Human Rights Act 1993.

Disabled People's Organisations (DPOs)

Representative organisations of disabled people and which are recognised by Article 4(3) of the Disability Convention.

District health boards (DHBs) Responsible for providing or funding the provision of most health services in their respective districts.

Electoral Commission

The agency responsible for all areas of electoral administration in New Zealand.

Health and Disability Commissioner (HDC)

An independent watchdog agency whose role is to promote and protect the rights of consumers as set out in the Code of Health and Disability Services Consumers' Rights. This includes resolving complaints in a fair, timely, and effective way.

Health Quality and Safety Commission

A Crown entity working with clinicians, providers and consumers to improve health and disability support services.

Human Rights Act 1993

Protects people in NZ from discrimination in a number of areas of life including on the ground of disability.

Human Rights Commission (HRC) The national human rights institution for New Zealand. Formed in 1977, it functions under the mandate of the Human Rights Act 1993.

Human Rights Review Tribunal (HRRT) A remedial body, it can hear claims relating to breaches of the:

- Human Rights Act 1993;
- Privacy Act 1993; and
- Health and Disability Commissioner Act 1994.

It can award compensatory damages for losses suffered. Awards are typically for injury to feelings, humiliation, and loss of dignity.

IHC Foundation Works to ensure people with an intellectual disability are valued and active members of their communities.

Independent Monitoring Mechanism (IMM)

The mechanism to monitor the Disability Convention/CRPD. In New Zealand, the IMM is made up of the Human Rights Commission, Office of the Ombudsman and the Disabled People's Organisations Coalition.

Leading the way in accessible information

An accessibility guide published by the Ministry of Social Development for writers, communicators, and designers, including web and IT tool designers, production houses and procured services to the public sector. A key part of the Accessibility Charter.

LGBTQIA+ Lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, queer, intersex, asexual +.

List of Issues

Questions posed by the Disability Committee on what it wants the Government to report back on.

Mana Whaikaha Prototype of the transformed disability support system, launched and trialled in mid-central New Zealand in October 2018.

Ministry for Business, Innovation and Employment

Plays a central role in shaping and delivering a strong New Zealand economy.

Ministry of Housing and Urban Development

Leads New Zealand's housing and urban development work programme.

Ministry of Social Development

Helping to build successful individuals, and in turn build strong, healthy families and communities. It does this by providing:

- employment, income support and superannuation services;
- funding to community service providers;
- social policy and advice to government;
- student allowances and loans; and
- social housing.

Minister for Social Development Currently Hon Carmel Sepuloni

Nationwide Health and Disability Advocacy Service

Free nationwide advocacy service, operating independently from all health and disability service providers and agencies.

New Zealand Bill of Rights Act 1990 (NZBoRA)

Sets out the rights and fundamental freedoms of anyone subject to New Zealand law, as a Bill of Rights.

New Zealand Disability Strategy Will guide the work of government agencies on disability issues from 2016 to 2026. It can also be used by individuals or organisations wanting to learn more about, and make the best decisions on, things important to disabled people.

NZS4121:2001 Design standard for access.

It provides well integrated and workable solutions for designing buildings and facilities that can be accessed and used by people with disabilities.

Office for Disability Issues (ODI)

Key agency in government on disability issues. Working toward a vision of New Zealand being a non-disabling society.

Ombudsman

An Ombudsman's role includes:

- investigating the administrative conduct of public sector agencies;
- reviewing their decisions relating to requests for official information;
- acting as a National Preventive Mechanism under the Crimes of Torture Act 1989;
- recommending remedial action be taken where agencies have acted unfairly;
- acting as an appropriate authority under the Protected Disclosures Act 2000; and
- providing advice and guidance relating to all of the above.

Oranga Tamariki—Ministry for Children

Government agency charged with guarding children and young people.

Privacy Act 1993

Controls how agencies collect, use, disclose, store and give access to 'personal information'. Personal information is information held about a living person.

Privacy Commissioner

Considers complaints under the Privacy Act 1993 about breaches of privacy and access to personal information. Also provides guidance on privacy rights.

Protection of Personal and Property Rights Act 1988

Provides mechanisms for decision-making on behalf of people who lack capacity to make decisions for themselves.

Rehabilitation International

A global organisation and network, working to empower disabled people and provide solutions toward achieving a more inclusive society.

Social Security Act 2018 Repealed previous pertinent Acts to update New Zealand's social security programme.

State Party/States Parties Governments that have signed a human rights treaty.

State Services Commission The central

Tāngata whaikaha Disabled people

Te reo Māori The first language and an official language of New Zealand.

Te Tiriti o Waitangi (Treaty of Waitangi) New Zealand's founding document, signed on 6 February 1840. It is an agreement, in Māori and English, made between the British Crown and about 540 Māori rangatira (chiefs).

Treaty of Waitangi See Te Tiriti o Waitangi, above.

United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (UNCRPD)

Also referred to as the CRPD, UNCRPD and the Disability Convention.

Universal Design for Learning (UDL)

A research-based framework that helps teachers plan learning to meet the diverse needs of all students.

Voice of the Young and Care Experienced (VOYCE—Whakarongo Mai)

An independent service that advocates for the approach that the voices of children and young people in care need to be kept at the centre of all decisions made about them.

Waitangi Tribunal Is charged with investigating and making recommendations on claims brought by Māori relating to actions or omissions of the Crown, largely in the period since 1840, that breach the promises made in the Treaty of Waitangi (see Te Tiriti o Waitangi, above).

Welfare Expert Advisory Group (WEAG)

Established by the Minister for Social Development to undertake a review of New Zealand's social welfare system.

Whakamana Tāngata: Restoring Dignity to Social Security in New Zealand

Published in 2019 by the Welfare Expert Advisory Group (WEAG), this report reviews the New Zealand welfare system, excluding New Zealand Superannuation, the Veteran's Pension and War Pensions, and the Student Support System.

Whānau Family